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ABSTRACT

This is the final annual report of a 4-year (1997-2001) third-party evaluation of the Structure of Intellect (SOI) Model Schools Pilot Program in Oregon. The SOI program was developed based on the learning theories and Structure of Intellect Model attributed to J. Guilford. The program used a combination of structured curriculum in the form of modules and an in-school SOI Learning Center to teach and develop learning abilities for elementary school students. This evaluation was approached from a systemic perspective that collected and examined relevant data from all Oregon schools using the SOI program and compared those to data from schools not using the program. The use of SOI classroom modules varied greatly among the pilot program schools, although it was apparent that the laboratory personnel who managed the program displayed kindness, dedication, and persistence. However, after 3 years of implementation for 15 schools and 3.5 years for 2 schools, the data collected from various sources and analyzed indicate no systemic or practical differences between the 17 SOI schools and their matched comparison schools. This conclusion, for academic achievement, rates of unacceptable student behavior or special education referrals, and student attendance was consistent over each of the 4 years. Nine appendixes contain additional information about the schools, materials used in the study, and data collection instruments. (Contains 23 tables, 27 figures, and 15 references.) (SLD)

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Third Party Evaluation of the Effectiveness of the Structure of Intellect Model Schools Pilot Program

Year 4 Evaluation Report

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Third Party Evaluation of the Effectiveness of the Structure of Intellect Model Schools Pilot Program

Year 4 Evaluation Report

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Third Party Evaluation of the Effectiveness of the Structure of Intellect Model Schools Pilot Program

Year 4 Evaluation Report

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- The 17 students, and their parents and teachers, who participated in this year's case studies for the evaluation;
- The students, administrators, and office personnel of the 17 unnamed Oregon elementary schools that served as comparison schools, who provided data essential for the comparative, value-added approach of this evaluation;
- The members of this program evaluation's Steering Group who provided sound advice on the design and conduct of the study;
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Andrew McConney
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Third Party Evaluation of the Effectiveness of the

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Third Party Evaluation of the Effectiveness of the Structure of Intellect Model Schools Pilot Program

Year 4 Evaluation Report

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

This is the final annual report of a four-year (1997-2001) third-party evaluation of the Structure of Intellect™ (SOI®) Model Schools Pilot Program (the "Program"). This evaluation was mandated by the Oregon legislature (Senate Bill 3, 1997), commissioned and overseen by the Office of Special Education, Oregon Department of Education, and conducted by the Evaluation and Research Group (ERGO) at Teaching Research, Western Oregon University.

Drs. Robert and Mary Meeker of Vida, Oregon developed the SOI Program based on the learning theories and Structure of Intellect model attributed to J. P. Guilford. For the SOI Model Schools Pilot Program in Oregon, Intellectual Development Systems, Inc. (IDS) of Annapolis, Maryland provided training of school personnel, materials, and ongoing support to the schools. IDS is the exclusive, worldwide provider of the SOI Program for schools, and markets its services under the 'BRIDGES' name.

According to its literature, the SOI Program uses a combination of structured curriculum in the form of modules, and an in-school SOI Learning Center, to teach and develop important learning abilities for students. The SOI Program focuses on twenty-six intellectual abilities that are claimed to be most critical to effective learning; for example, the abilities needed to acquire, store, evaluate, and use information.

In January 1998, after a competitive and public process, the Evaluation and Research Group at Teaching Research was awarded a contract to design and conduct a 4-year (renewable annually) external, objective, and question-based evaluation of the SOI Program in Oregon. The Oregon Legislature (Senate Bill 3, 1997), with the active support of the State Superintendent of Public Instruction (at that time, Norma Paulus), had recently put in place the SOI Pilot Program and provision for its accompanying external evaluation. Three Oregon elementary schools participated in that first phase of the SOI Pilot Program (Adrian and Vale Elementary schools in eastern Oregon, and Captain Robert Gray Elementary in Astoria on the northern coast).

After successful completion of the first year's program evaluation, Teaching Research's evaluation contract was extended for another year (the 1998-1999 school year). As well, 16 elementary schools, representing most geographical areas of the state, were added to the group of schools piloting the SOI Program, bringing to 19 the total number of schools using the Program in Oregon. Represented school types ranged from very small, rural schools such as Fossil Grade School to large, metropolitan-area schools such as Fairview Elementary.

At the completion of the second year of the SOI Pilot Program and its accompanying evaluation, the Program was reviewed for continuation during the 1999 Oregon Legislative session. Again, with the important support of a number of Oregon senators, the SOI Program was approved for continuation for another two school years (1999-2001), albeit in the final analysis, at a somewhat reduced level of funding from the previous year's Program. Having successfully conducted the Pilot Program's external evaluation for one-and-one-half school years, Teaching Research's program evaluation contract was also extended for two years, at a similarly reduced level of state funding. As well, and for different reasons, two schools decided to not continue in the SOI Pilot

Program (Vale Elementary, and Waldport Elementary on the central Oregon coast). Thus, 17 elementary schools, still representing most geographical regions of Oregon, were left using the SOI Program for years 3 (1999-2000) and 4 (2000-2001) of the SOI Model Schools Pilot Program.

A second significant change occurred in Program character occurred in this 4th year of the Pilot Program. Four schools discontinued use of the SOI classroom modules and became "SOI Lab only" schools. This occurred primarily because of budgetary concerns; these schools did not have sufficient funds to purchase new modules for the classrooms, and at the same time, operate the SOI Lab.

This report primarily represents the program evaluation findings and conclusions from the 4th year's implementation of the SOI Program in 17 Oregon elementary schools. However, we strongly emphasize that the program evaluation now spans three-and-one-half schools years, dating back to January 1998. In that period of time, the program evaluation team has:

1. Attended SOI school staff training and other formal informational meetings conducted by IDS, the SOI Program provider for Oregon, as well as meeting on several occasions with IDS marketing, training, and research representatives to discuss the Program and the current evaluation;

2. Conducted 170 site visits at participating SOI Pilot schools (30 site visits in 2000-2001 plus 21 telephone interviews) during which the team interviewed SOI Learning Center staff and building administrators and observed school children engaged in Learning Center activities;

3. Conducted 22 case studies, 17 of which were followed-up this year, of individual children served by the SOI Learning Centers, including interviews with parents, and an additional 18 school visits to observe children and to interview teachers and other instructional resource specialists, to better understand how the Program might work for individual students;

4. Convened and analyzed the results of 8 focus groups for SOI school staff and classroom teachers in which participants were afforded extended opportunities to describe and otherwise comment on the Program in a secure setting away from their schools (2 focus groups for SOI school staff were conducted in 2000-2001);

5. Designed, administered, and analyzed the results of 8 paper-and–pencil classroom teacher surveys to gauge teachers' satisfaction with the SOI classroom curriculum, and to give voice to teachers in participating schools on issues aligned with their perceptions and observations of the efficacy of the Program (2 surveys were completed in 2000-2001);

6. Conducted 17 interviews with classroom teachers from 10 Pilot Program schools to obtain a sample of teacher views about the Program;

7. Gathered and analyzed 4 rounds of annual data, from SOI and matched comparison schools, on outcomes directly aligned with the questions asked of this evaluation by the Oregon Department of Education, and by extension, the Oregon Legislature, including numbers of children referred for special education assessment, numbers of children referred for unacceptable behavior, numbers of children served by and graduating from English as a second language programs, and school attendance rates;

8. Gathered (directly from the Oregon Department of Education) and analyzed statewide assessment data, for benchmark grades 3 and 5, comprised of more than 29,000 student scores in reading/literature, writing, mathematics, and math problem solving for the students of SOI and matched comparison schools;

9. Analyzed the academic growth of two cohorts of students. The state's assessment of students who had been third graders in 1997-1998 and 1998-1999, and were fifth graders in 1999-2000 and 2000-2001, respectively, provided two unusually good opportunities to track the academic growth in key areas of cohorts of students who had experienced the SOI Program over at least two consecutive school years.

In addition to these evaluation activities, a Steering Group of experienced educators, including Glen Fielding, Director of Curriculum, Assessment, and Research at Willamette Education Service District; Larry Irwin,

Professor and Associate Dean for Research and Outreach at the College of Education, University of Oregon; Jack Stoops, Superintendent of Schools, Lincoln Co. SD; Joel Arick, Professor of Special Education and Counselor Education at the School of Education, Portland State University, and Vic Baldwin, Professor and former Director of Teaching Research Division, Western Oregon University, has periodically overseen the design, conduct, and reporting of this program evaluation. As well, the Oregon Department of Education's Office of Special Education, directed by Steven Johnson, routinely monitored the conduct of the evaluation.

Given the scope and diversity of data collected and analyzed, and the diversity of methods used, as well as the length of time over which these data have been gathered, we believe that the evaluation team currently is in an appropriate position to comment on the effectiveness of the SOI Model Schools Pilot Program for the State of Oregon.

However, before commenting on the general findings and conclusions of this year's program evaluation, and the relationship of those to previous years', one further point seems necessary. It is this. The understanding of the evaluation team is that its charge from the State of Oregon is to determine to the best of its ability the effectiveness of the SOI Program for Oregon schools and children *generally*. This is an essential point, in that it forms our understanding of the basis on which the Program had been "bought" by the state. Specifically, the developers and purveyors of the SOI Program have claimed in their literature, and in public forums, that the SOI Program would have the following benefits for *any school* using the Program:

- Improvement in students' academic achievement;
- Decreases in referrals for special education assessment and/or services;
- Improvement in students' behavior;
- Improvement in students' rates of English language acquisition; and,
- Improvement in school attendance rates.

These claims, not for one particular type of school, or one or a few particular students, but rather for schools and students *in general*, form the basis for the operational definition of SOI Program effectiveness, and are reflected in the key questions asked in the Oregon Department of Education's request for evaluation proposals (ODE, January, 1998), and with Oregon Senate Bill 3 (1997).

Thus, this evaluation has been approached from a systemic perspective that collected and examined relevant data from *all* Oregon schools using the SOI Program, and compared those against data from a similar group of schools not using the Program. In this way, the evaluation seeks to determine what value had been added to the group of schools using the SOI Program, over and above the changes seen in a similar group of schools not using the Program.

In terms of Program implementation, it will not be a surprise to readers that the use of SOI classroom modules varied markedly among the Pilot Program schools. Some schools maintained a high level of fidelity to the prescribed implementation procedures, while others loosely followed the procedures (some to the point where module use was "optional"), and still other schools discontinued module implementation altogether, running the Program as "Lab only." There was marked variation of module implementation *within* the SOI Pilot Program schools as well: in some schools all classes implemented the modules regularly; in other schools only some of the grades (frequently the primary grades) implemented the modules while others did not; in some schools SOI module activities were teacher-directed while in other schools the modules were used as free-time, and student-directed activities.

There was also variation in the implementation of the SOI Lab activities in the pilot schools. Some of the Specialists and Technicians followed the prescribed methods very closely while others sought to adapt the activities to the unique demands of the children attending the Lab. Our purpose in here noting these variations in Program implementation is to point out that variation notwithstanding, when pairs of schools are compared (SOI Pilot Program school vs. matched comparison school) there appears to be little or no relationship between the fidelity of implementation of the SOI Program and changes in student or school outcomes (e.g., student achievement, behavior referrals, attendance). This lack of relationship between the fidelity of SOI Program

implementation and improvements for schools or students generally supports the evaluation's findings on the absence of any systematic SOI Program effect.

Despite considerable variability in the implementation of both SOI classroom modules and Lab activities, we hasten to emphasize that the Lab personnel who managed the Program displayed great kindness to the children in their care, dedication and persistence in their daily work, and tenacity in communicating to the children their expectations for their success. The children cannot have been unaffected by such attention. Similarly, the building administrators demonstrated great flexibility in obtaining and implementing the pilot Program and helping all involved navigate the numerous and often competing demands that educators face in our public schools. Their dedication to their schools and staffs, and their openness to ideas designed to help children progress and succeed are a testament to their professionalism.

Still, at the end of the day, after 3 years of implementation for 15 schools and 3½ years of implementation for 2 schools, the data collected and analyzed from the various sources delineated above indicate no systemic or practical differences between the 17 SOI Pilot Program and their matched comparison schools. This conclusion, for academic achievement, rates of unacceptable student behavior or special education referrals, and student attendance has held consistent over each of the four years of this mixed-method program evaluation.

Finally, that the SOI Program was unable to support the claims made for it, in our view remains the sole responsibility of its developers and purveyors, and should in no way detract from the efforts, skills, and caring of the Oregon educators and students who implemented it.

Introduction to the Evaluation

This is the final annual report of a four-year (1997-2001) third-party evaluation of the Structure of Intellect™ Model School Program. This evaluation was mandated by the Oregon legislature (Senate Bill 3, 1997), commissioned and overseen by the Office of Special Education, Oregon Department of Education, and conducted by the Evaluation and Research Group (ERGO) at Teaching Research, Western Oregon University.

Consistent with its three predecessors, this Year 4 (July, 2000—June, 2001) report comprises six major sections. The first (Introduction to the Evaluation) provides background for the program evaluation including brief descriptions of the purpose of the evaluation, the Structure of Intellect™ (SOI®) Model School Program, the questions that guide the evaluation, and the methods used and types of data gathered that address those questions. The second (Pilot School Settings) and third (Program Implementation) sections provide additional context that frames this evaluation of the SOI Program. The "Settings" section gives brief descriptions of the seventeen Oregon elementary schools that implemented the program during the 2000-2001 school year, and the "Implementation" section describes a number of issues related to the execution of the program in the schools, particularly the changes in Program implementation that happened this past year. Together, these descriptions provide information important for understanding the evaluation findings and conclusions generally. The fourth section (Evaluation Findings) comprises the data gathered and analyses conducted for Year 4. This year, the "Findings" section is presented in two parts organized around academic (student achievement) and non-academic (e.g., special education referrals, behavior referrals) outcomes. The fifth section (Conclusions and Discussion) provides a synthesis of the evaluation's Year 4 findings, and relates these to the findings for Years 1, 2, and 3. The last section (Appendixes) includes supplementary materials such as background information on the SOI pilot schools, a schedule of site visits by the evaluation team over the past year, the focus group protocol and transcripts, and the instruments developed and used for gathering data from teachers and schools during Year 4 of the evaluation study.

Purpose of the Evaluation Study

Simply stated, the primary purpose of this third-party evaluation is to determine the effectiveness of the Structure of Intellect (SOI) Model School Program (hereafter, the "Program"), as implemented in a pilot program in 3 Oregon elementary schools beginning in February 1998, extending to 16 additional elementary schools (or a total of 19 pilot schools) for the 1998-1999 school year, and continuing in 17 pilot elementary schools for the 1999-2000 and 2000-2001 school years.

For this evaluation, program "effectiveness" is operationally defined as:

- Improvement in student achievement in language arts (reading and literature, as well as writing for grade 5 students) and mathematics (including math problem solving for grade 5 students);
- Decreases in referrals for special education assessment and/or services;
- Improvement in students' behavior;
- Improvement in school attendance rates; and,
- Improvement in students' rates of English language acquisition (for students whose primary language is other than English).

This definition of program effectiveness is in line with the key questions asked in the Oregon Department of Education's request for proposal (ODE, January, 1998), and with Oregon Senate Bill 3 (1997).

Over the four years of this program evaluation, it was the shared understanding of the Oregon Department of Education, Office of Special Education, and the ERGO evaluation team that because of the mid-year start for the SOI Program and the short duration (mid-February 1998 through mid-May 1998) of its initial implementation in 3 schools, that while a comprehensive array of data gathering techniques was used in the evaluation, the findings of the Year 1 report were tentative. Further, it was understood that the Year 1 report

represented the foundation for continuing the program evaluation toward more definitive answers regarding program effectiveness by the end of Year 2 (1998-99 school year), and even more so by the end of Years 3 and 4 (1999-2001 school years). In particular, it was noted that for Year 3 and Year 4, the state's assessment of students who had been third graders in 1997-98 and 1998-99, and then fifth graders in 1999-00 and 2000-01, respectively, provided an excellent opportunity to track the academic growth of two consecutive cohorts of students who had each experienced the SOI Program over at least two consecutive school years.

Structure of Intellect Model School Program

Drs. Robert Meeker and Mary Meeker of Vida, Oregon developed he SOI Program based on the learning theories and Structure of Intellect model attributed to J. P. Guilford. For the SOI Model School Pilot Program in Oregon, Intellectual Development Systems, Inc. headquartered in Annapolis, Maryland and with branch offices in Eugene, Oregon provides SOI materials, training of school personnel, and ongoing support. IDS is a "privately held and capitalized company with facilities in San Diego, CA, where research and development is located, and in Eugene, Oregon, where training and customer support operations are based" (IDS, 1997a, p. 8). "IDS is the exclusive, worldwide provider of this system in learning institutions worldwide, and markets the service under the 'BRIDGES' name" (IDS, 1997a, p. 4).

According to its own literature, the Structure of Intellect (SOI) Model School Program is an education program that uses a combination of structured curriculum in the form of classroom modules, and an in-school SOI Learning Center (also known as the "SOI Lab" or the "BRIDGES Lab") to teach and develop important learning abilities for students. The SOI Program focuses on twenty-six intellectual abilities that are claimed to be most critical to effective learning; for example, the abilities needed to acquire, store, evaluate, and use information. These twenty-six abilities are taught in activities grouped around *learning preparation, learning enhancement,* and *learning remediation* (IDS, 1997a). Learning preparation is addressed in classroom exercises that are designed to take place for 15-20 minutes per school day. Similarly, learning enhancement is also accomplished through classroom activities. In both cases, SOI classroom modules are articulated in difficulty through eight to twelve exercises, and all materials are provided to the classroom teacher with no teacher preparation required. Learning remediation, on the other hand, is addressed in the SOI Learning Center where students are assessed in terms of cognitive abilities, perceptual skills, and sensory-motor skill integration. Students' learning ability deficiencies are diagnosed and treatment plans (Integrated Practice Protocol, IPP) are provided either on a group basis (grades K-2) or on an individual basis (grades 3-5/6). Students participate in SOI Learning Center activities ideally for 30 minutes, twice per week (IDS, 1997a). The SOI Program (classroom modules and Learning Center activities) are designed as a "treatment" to be completed by students within 7 months, that is, the time span of a normal school year (Robert Meeker, personal communication, Vida, OR, November 19, 1998).

According to the SOI Model School literature, SOI instruction and an SOI Learning Center housed in a participating school lead to improvements in the achievement levels of *all* students. Further, according to SOI literature, students with learning disabilities—who heretofore have consumed a disproportionate share of educational resources—*will no longer have learning disabilities*, and consequently will not require the levels of resources previously applied. Specifically, IDS and SOI staff and literature claim:

> It is the expectation of this program that the students will be cured of their learning disabilities—i.e., they will then be able to function in a regular classroom, not a remedial classroom. (Meeker, Meeker, & Hochstein, 1996, p. 6)

and,

> Because the Program measurably improves general academic performance, the mind's ability to focus, and overall intellectual competence, in school, it reduces referrals to Special Education, developmental instruction, disciplinary action, etc. (IDS, 1997a, p. 1).

Thus, the developers and providers of the SOI Program state that participating schools can expect the following outcomes

- Increased academic performance;
- Decreased special education referrals;
- Decreased disciplinary referrals; and,
- Increased school attendance.

Additionally, based on the question content of student assessment and self-assessment instruments developed by IDS for its own program evaluation (IDS, 1997b), the implied expectation is that measurable improvements will also occur in students' self-esteem as a result of the SOI Program.

Questions Addressed by the Evaluation

Teaching Research's third-party evaluation of the Structure of Intellect Model Schools Pilot Program is designed to study the effectiveness of the program, for students of participating Oregon elementary schools, with regard to academic performance, special education referrals, behavior referrals, school attendance, and English language acquisition for students who have a first language other than English.

The evaluation thus focuses heavily on the near- and intermediate-term *impact* of the SOI Program for students in participating schools. To assess SOI Program impact, the evaluation team has addressed the following key questions:

1. Is there a significant difference in *students' academic performance in mathematics and reading/literature* between schools experiencing the SOI Program and similar schools that do not participate in the Program?

2. Is there a significant difference in *levels of Special Education referrals* between schools experiencing the SOI Program and similar schools that do not participate in the Program?

3. Is there a significant difference in *levels of behavior referrals* between schools experiencing the SOI Program and similar schools that do not participate in the Program?

4. Is there a significant difference in *language acquisition rates for students with English as a second language* between schools experiencing the SOI Program and similar schools that do not participate in the Program?

5. Is there a significant difference in *student attendance rates* between schools experiencing the SOI Program and similar schools that do not participate in the Program?

Overall, to answer the five key questions posed above, the Teaching Research evaluation team has employed a quasi-experimental design supplemented by selected case studies, teacher surveys and interviews, focus group interviews, and on-site observations. The general evaluation design is depicted by the schematic in Figure 1.

Procedures used to Gather, Analyze and Interpret Data

For Years 1 through 3, and now for Year 4 of the SOI Program evaluation, a variety of quantitative and qualitative data have been gathered using a variety of collection methods. First, and central to the evaluation, student achievement data in reading/literature, writing, mathematics, and math problem solving from Oregon's Statewide Assessments at benchmark grades 3 and 5 have been collected with the cooperation of Department of Education staff. Second, data collection instruments (see Appendix 9) were developed by the evaluation team and provided to staff of SOI and comparison schools. These instruments were developed to collect quantitative data on student referrals for assessment to determine special education service eligibility, student referrals for inappropriate behavior, numbers of students entering or leaving English as a second language (ESL) services, school attendance rates, and levels of teacher satisfaction with the SOI classroom curriculum.

Both statewide assessment data and the data provided directly by participating schools have been used in graphical and statistical analyses to provide answers to the five key evaluation questions posed above. To "level the playing field" as much as possible before statistical comparisons were made, comparison schools—matched to each SOI pilot school—were carefully selected and recruited in Years 1 and 2, and retained as sources of comparative data in Years 3 and 4. Each comparison school was matched to an SOI peer using variables such as

school socioeconomic status (SES) rank within Oregon, school size, and previous performance on state assessments (by grade and subject). After matching, most statistical analyses were conducted using independent t-test and/or more sophisticated analysis of covariance (ANCOVA) routines with SPSS™ software.

Four qualitative methods were used to supplement and support the 6 quantitative lines of data. The qualitative data gathering was particularly useful and important during the first year of the SOI pilot and evaluation and has complemented well the quantitative data collected in Years 2 through 4 of the evaluation. The qualitative data allow deeper understanding of the SOI Program and its possible or claimed effects for students and teachers than would have been possible using only large scale or school-wide quantitative data.

The first qualitative method employed was the "school site visit." Participating SOI school visits included an initial site visit to each school by the evaluation team, during which the team interviewed the school's principal and the SOI Learning Center Specialist and Technicians (school SOI Lab staff) and inspected the school facilities designated for use as the SOI Learning Center. Over the course of the 2000-01 school year, two members of the evaluation team visited each SOI pilot school 2 times (Fall and Winter). At each school site visit the evaluation team conducted informal interviews with SOI school staff and principals, either together or separately. At a basic level, these observations helped monitor whether the SOI Pilot Program was implemented as designed and planned, and thereby may help explain observed differences among SOI schools or between SOI and comparison schools.

The second type of qualitative method used was the "case study." By providing detailed descriptions of the school and home backgrounds of selected children from multiple perspectives, case studies allowed the evaluation team to study how the SOI Program (particularly the SOI Learning Center) works for individual students over time. Further, because the case studies included file reviews, observations, interviews, and surveys, they allowed a broad range of stakeholder involvement in the evaluation. Specifically, the case study protocol included:

- Reviews of students' school files;
- Observations and interviews of students;
- Surveys and interviews of parents and/or guardians; and,
- Interviews with classroom teachers and school specialists, as well as SOI school staff.

Case studies were conducted with students from 13 of the 17 schools that continued the SOI program this academic year (2000-01). In this final year, the case studies focused on following-up with children who had completed their SOI Programs within the first 3 years of the pilot Program, to determine how their lives had or had not changed since "graduating" from the Program. By drawing the complex realities that make up individual children's lives, the case studies provide support and understanding through illustrative anecdote for the quantitative analyses conducted.

The third qualitative method used in this program evaluation was the "focus group interview." Focus groups provide unique opportunities to learn directly from a group of stakeholders, in this case SOI Specialists and Technicians, on questions of interest for the program evaluation. Importantly, the focus group method provides the opportunity for the stakeholder group to interact during the session so that views and answers that may not be forthcoming in individual interviews are given the opportunity to emerge. In Year 4, 2 focus groups were convened for SOI school staff during the Spring. In each session, the evaluation team posed questions pertaining to:

- School-wide effects of the SOI Program, both intended and unintended, given 3 or 4 years of Program use;
- Student-centered effects of the SOI *Lab* Program, both intended and unintended, given 3 or 4 years of Program use;
- Student-centered effects of the SOI *classroom* Program, both intended and unintended, given 3 or 4 years of Program use;
- Classroom teacher implementation of and reaction to the SOI classroom modules;
- Recommendations and/or advice, given 3 or 4 years of Program experience, to IDS (the Program provider).

Similar to the student case studies, the focus group interviews provided important supporting detail for the quantitative analyses that address the main questions posed. Specifically, the data collected from the focus groups served a number of purposes, including

1) Confirming or disconfirming the results collected from the teacher satisfaction survey;
2) Clarifying and/or confirming information gathered during site visits to SOI schools; and,
3) Providing insight that helps explain observed differences, or the lack thereof, among SOI schools, and/or between SOI and non-SOI schools.

The fourth qualitative method used in Year 3 of this program evaluation was a "open-ended teacher interview" with one or two teachers each from selected schools. In all, the evaluation team conducted 10 interviews with teachers representing 9 of the 17 SOI pilot schools. Because it was clearly important to gather in-depth input about the Program from as many classroom teachers in SOI pilot schools as possible, the evaluation team designed an interview for teachers comprised of open-ended questions aligned with the dimensions of student outcomes addressed by this evaluation. Two members of the evaluation team conducted each teacher interview. Again, teachers' responses to the interviews provided important detail—supporting the larger-scale quantitative data—on the possible effects of SOI in each area of student impact, and on the overall usability and worth of the Program.

Overall, and over the course of four school years, a broad array of data has been collected and brought to bear on answering the questions central to this evaluation. These data were carefully gathered from multiple sources using diverse techniques at multiple points in time over the course of this school year, as well as the three years prior. When appropriately synthesized, these data provide a rich picture from which to reach solid evaluative conclusions about the SOI Program and its implementation in 17 Oregon elementary schools.

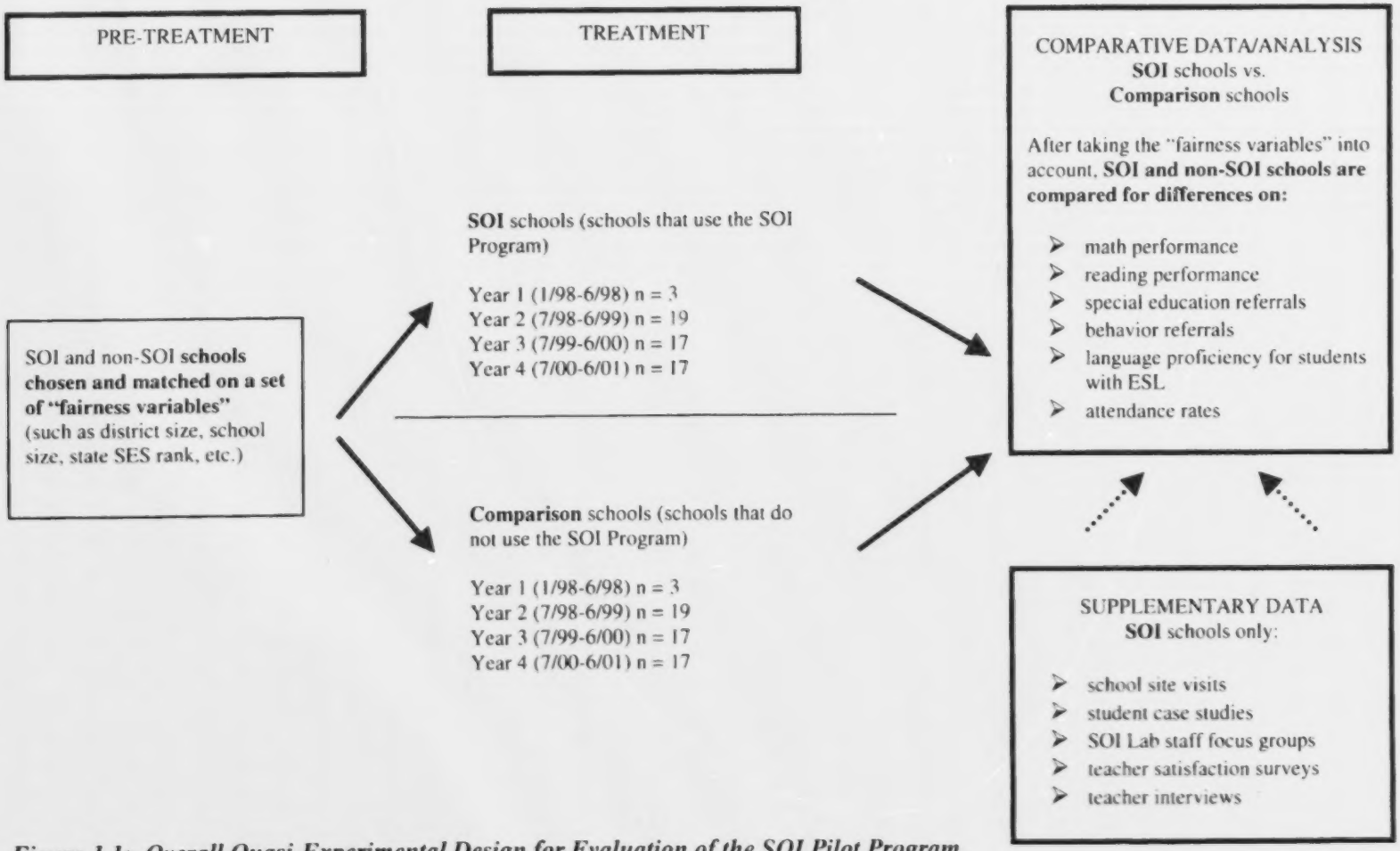
PRE-TREATMENT
TREATMENT
COMPARATIVE DATA/ANALYSIS
SOI schools vs.
Comparison schools
After taking the "fairness variables" into account, SOI and non-SOI schools are compared for differences on:
math performance
reading performance
special education referrals
behavior referrals
language proficiency for students with ESL
attendance rates
SOI schools (schools that use the SOI Program)
Year 1 (1/98-6/98) n = 3
Year 2 (7/98-6/99) n = 19
Year 3 (7/99-6/00) n = 17
Year 4 (7/00-6/01) n = 17
SOI and non-SOI schools chosen and matched on a set of "fairness variables" (such as district size, school size, state SES rank, etc.)
Comparison schools (schools that do not use the SOI Program)
Year 1 (1/98-6/98) n = 3
Year 2 (7/98-6/99) n = 19
Year 3 (7/99-6/00) n = 17
Year 4 (7/00-6/01) n = 17
SUPPLEMENTARY DATA
SOI schools only:
school site visits
student case studies
SOI Lab staff focus groups
teacher satisfaction surveys
teacher interviews

Figure 1.1: Overall Quasi-Experimental Design for Evaluation of the SOI Pilot Program

Settings

Introduction

This section of the report provides a summary of each of the 17 schools participating in the SOI Program at the end of Year 4 of the program evaluation. Together the schools comprise a fair sampling of Oregon elementary schools, both demographically and economically. Their locations range from the Portland metropolitan area, central to far eastern Oregon, the Willamette Valley, and the Oregon coast. The schools and school communities vary in economic conditions, available special services, and student population needs.

On the following pages individual school summaries are organized accordingly:

- school photograph;
- surrounding community/city description;
- school site and population description; and
- SOI Lab characteristics.

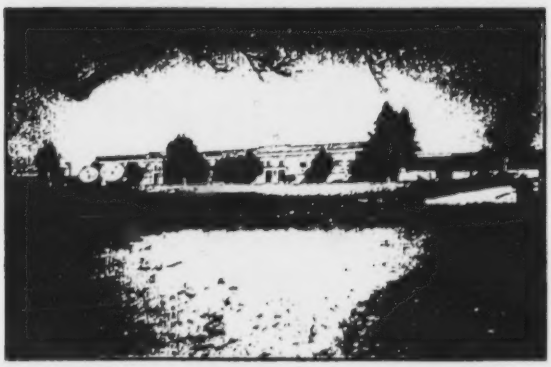

Figure 2.1: Adrian Elementary School, Adrian

Adrian Elementary School is one of the original schools to pilot the SOI Program beginning in 1997-98. The school site is on the edge of the town of Adrian, population 147, a small, rural far eastern town in Malheur County. The nearest major city is Ontario, approximately 25 miles away. Malheur County's primary industries are agriculture, livestock, and food processing, with an onion packing company as Adrian's largest employer, and the school district as the town's second largest employer. Annual per capita income in the county is about $19,542.

Adrian Elementary reported a K-5 population of 122 students at year end. The school shares the same grounds as the middle/high school buildings. The principal has completed his 3rd year in the position, and he has served the district for more than 20 years. Adrian also had some previous experience with SOI over 20 years ago. Adrian experienced no staff turnover this year. Average student / teacher ratio was 18 to 1. Reported last in 2000, the school's socioeconomic status (SES) rank in the state was fairly low, at around 149 out of 754 for 3rd grade, and 172 out of 734 for 5th grade (higher numbers mean higher SES). Student turnover was last reported as being high, at approximately 27%. Sixty-two percent of students qualified for free or reduced cost meals.

The SOI Lab at Adrian Elementary completed its 4th year, and continued through the year in its original room in the school building. The room is underground, yet bright and colorful despite not having any windows. The Lab served all 26 kindergarteners this past year, and 22 1st through 5th grade students. The Lab was run by a half-time Specialist, who has been in the SOI Pilot Program since its beginning, and a half-time Technician (1st year in the SOI Lab) whose 2 children have been served in the Lab Program. Two students, or 9% of the 22 1st though 5th grade students served, completed the Lab portion of the SOI Program at Adrian this school year. One student missed graduating by 1 day. The SOI Program at Adrian is not expected to continue next year.

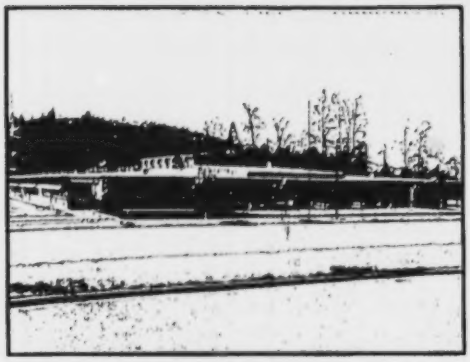

Figure 2.2: Allen Dale Elementary School, Grants Pass

Allen Dale Elementary School is just south of the Rogue River in Grants Pass, population 23,003, a fairly large southwest town in Josephine County. The nearest major city is Medford, approximately 29 miles away. The county's principal industries are manufacturing durable goods, retail trade, and health services, with a community hospital and health care center as the largest local employer. The annual per capita income in the county is about $19,862.

Allen Dale Elementary reported 414 students in grades K-5 at year end. The school is on a large 22-acre site. Allen Dale is a Title I school, with 59% of students qualifying for free or reduced cost meals. Average student / teacher ratio was 20 to 1. The school's 5th grade class is small compared to the other grades. Like Adrian, Allen Dale also had some experience with SOI some twenty-plus years ago. The school's staff is reported to be historically consistent; teaching staff remains unchanged in the last few years, and consists of experienced practitioners. The principal, though, was new to the school this year, as was the Special Education Director. In 2000, Allen Dale's SES rank in the state was 335 out of 754 for 3rd grade, and 355 out of 734 for 5th grade. Student turnover was last reported fairly high at 24%. Five other elementary schools are in the Grants Pass area.

Allen Dale's SOI Lab started the 2000-01 year with 52 students continuing from the previous year's Program. Allen Dale completed its 3rd year as part of the SOI Pilot Program. The Lab remained in a contained room in the school's main building. Allen Dale's SOI Lab has been operated by 3 persons: 2 Technicians worked with the students, while the Specialist (a classroom teacher) assisted the Lab in a supervisory role. One Technician and the Specialist have been with the Program since it began at Allen Dale. The Lab experienced a high level of parent participation and support. In total, 145 students were served, including 72 kindergarteners. At year end, 25 students had completed the Program. The SOI Program at Allen Dale is not expected to continue next year.

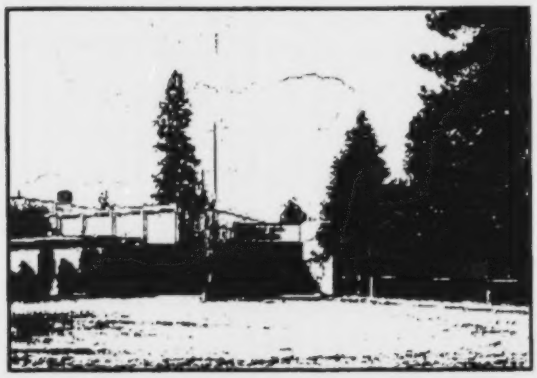

Figure 2.3: Bear Creek Elementary School

Bear Creek Elementary School is in a residential neighborhood in the southeast of Bend, population 52,029, a large central Oregon town in Deschutes County. The nearest major town is Redmond, approximately 13 miles away. The county's principal industries are lumber, agriculture, and tourism, with one of its medical centers as the largest local employer. The annual per capita income is about $24,784.

Bear Creek reported 566 students in grades K-5 at year end. This year Bear Creek is no longer serving as the district's "overflow" school as it was last year, which resulted in a high turnover of students. This year the student population is more stable and behavior issues are reported to be reduced. Bear Creek is a Title I school. The school's student to teacher ratio average was 20 to 1. The school's SOI Program shifted to "Lab only" this year, discontinuing the classroom modules. In 2000, the school's SES rank in the state was 407 out of 754 for 3rd grade, and 411 out of 734 for 5th grade. Nearly 40% percent of students qualified for free or reduced cost meals. Nine other public and a few private elementary schools are in the Bend area.

Bear Creek's SOI Lab completed its 3rd year in 2000-2001 with the Lab operated by 1 SOI Technician. Her previous SOI Lab Technician partner since 1998 was moved to work with the Title I program. The principal assumed the SOI Specialist role. The Lab space remained in a room in the school's main building. In all, 74

students were served in the SOI Lab at Bear Creek, with an anticipated 9 to 12 students completing or nearly completing the program at year's end. Bear Creek's principal is in the process of seeking funding for a continuation of the Program in some capacity for next year. The vision screening aspect of the Program is being considered in the strategic planning process for the district.

Figure 2.4: Evergreen Elementary School, Redmond

Evergreen Elementary School is a few blocks from the downtown business area in Redmond, population 13,481, a medium sized central Oregon town in Deschutes County. The nearest major city is Bend, approximately 13 miles away. Like Bend, Redmond's principal industries are lumber, agriculture, and tourism, and in Redmond the school district is the largest local employer. The county's annual per capita income is about $24,784.

Evergreen Elementary reported 482 students in grades K-5 at year end. Community growth continued to increase class sizes. The principal this year is new to the school. Evergreen went to the "Lab only" version of the SOI Program this past year, discontinuing use of the classroom modules. Evergreen's 2000 SES ranking within the state was 387 out of 754 for 3rd grade, and 356 out of 734 for 5th grade. Student turnover was last reported at approximately 16%. Student / teacher average ratio was 18 to 1. Nearly 45% of students qualified for free or reduced cost meals. Three other public elementary schools are in the Redmond area.

Evergreen's SOI Lab completed its 3rd year. The Specialist, who began with the Program at Evergreen, operated the Lab on her own. Evergreen's SOI Program experienced significant cutbacks this year. In addition to discontinuing the classroom portion of the Program, Lab staffing from previous years was reduced: the Specialist's time went from full to half-time, and the number of staff operating the Lab went from 2 persons to 1. This SOI Lab's vision screening continued to be highlighted, and funding and vision professionals from the community continued to enhance this capacity. The Lab also served a group of "talented and gifted" (TAG) students. Despite cutbacks, 100 students were served in Evergreen's SOI Lab this year, with 50 students (50%) completing their Programs. At this time, the SOI Program at Evergreen is not expected to continue next year.

Figure 2.5: Fairview Elementary School, Fairview

Fairview Elementary School is a part of Fairview Community near a major freeway, within the Portland metropolitan area that covers the Multnomah-Washington Counties region. Fairview is specifically in Multnomah county, Oregon's smallest but most heavily populated county, with well over a million people. Within Fairview city's boundaries are approximately 7,561 people. Gresham, the nearest city, is within 4 miles; Portland is 11 miles away. The Fairview community has few businesses, and is primarily residential, consisting of older, smaller homes and apartment complexes.

Fairview reported 475 students in grades K-5 at year end. Because of continued increased enrollment, Fairview Elementary experienced many changes in room and teacher assignments. Like last year, the school continued to experience saturated classes despite changes. The school building is older and in need of repair, and contains asbestos. Two new 4th and 5th grades teachers and 1 ESL teacher were hired to fill new positions for the school year. Fairview has high numbers of second language learners. An additional ESL classroom was opened this year in a modular unit behind the main building, in

addition to a new district self-contained behavior class. Student / teacher average ratio was 24 to 1. Classroom teachers continue to use the classroom modules. The school's 2000 SES rank in the state was 298 out of 754 for 3rd grade, and 285 out of 734 for 5th grade. Student turnover was reported to be quite high. Forty-nine percent of students qualified for free or reduced cost meals. Nine other elementary schools are in the surrounding community.

This year Fairview has completed its 3rd year in the SOI Pilot Program. At the start of the school year the SOI Lab, previously in a modular unit behind the school's main building, was part of the shift to accommodate numbers of students, and was moved into a main building basement room behind a busy hallway. Overhead foot traffic made the room noisy, so the Lab was moved again to a less noisy basement room. An SOI Technician continued to operate the Lab alone this year. The Lab no longer served whole-class kindergarteners as in previous years. Student turnover in Lab was quite high during the year as students moved in and out of the district. Fairview's Lab served 82 students this year. Twenty (25%) students completed or nearly completed their SOI Programs. The SOI Program at Fairview is not expected to continue next year.

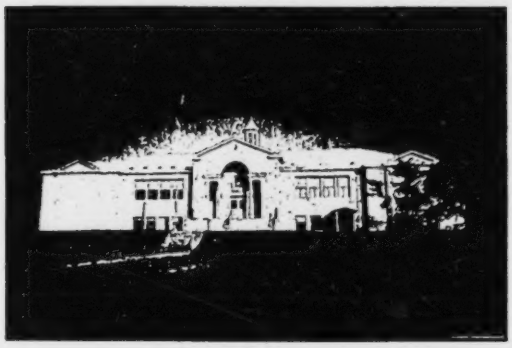

Figure 2.6: Fossil Grade School, Fossil

Fossil Grade School is close to downtown Fossil, population 469, a small north-central town in Wheeler County. The school site is next to a major Oregon geological fossil bed. The nearest major city is The Dalles, approximately 89 miles away. Agriculture, lumber, and tourism are Wheeler County's principal industries, and Fossil School is the largest employer in Fossil. Wheeler County's annual per capita income is about $15,555.

Fossil reported 58 students in grades K-8 at year end. The principal has held the position for 3½ years. Fossil continued to implement the classroom modules portion of the SOI Program. Fossil's student / teacher average ratio was 11 to 1. Fossil's 2000 SES rank in the state was 325 out of 754 for 3rd grade, and 314 out of 734 for 5th grade. Student turnover was last reported at approximately 19%. Sixty-two percent of students qualified for free or reduced cost meals. Fossil is the only elementary/middle school in the community.

The SOI Program at Fossil serves grades K-6, and has been in operation for 3 years. The Lab continued in its own space, housed in the grade school basement. Fossil's original SOI Program Technician operated the Lab by herself this year, with the Specialist of 2 years returning to full-time special education duties. Forty-three students were served through the year, and 17 students (40%) completed their Programs. The SOI Program is not expected to continue at Fossil Elementary next year.

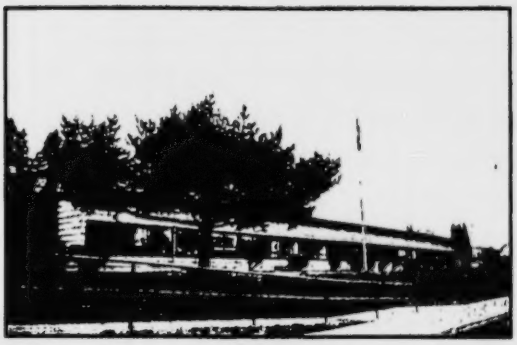

Figure 2.7: Goshen Elementary School, Eugene

Goshen Elementary School skirts the southern edge of Eugene, population 137,893, a mid-Willamette Valley town in Lane County. Goshen Elementary is actually a part of the Springfield school district of the neighboring town of Springfield. Eugene is a major Willamette Valley city, approximately 65 miles from the state's capitol, Salem. Lane County's main industries are agriculture, education (including Oregon's largest public university), and tourism, with one of its medical centers as Eugene's largest employer. The annual per capita income in Lane County is about $24,151.

Goshen Elementary reported 130 students at year end. The principal was new to the school this year. Student to teacher average ratio was 22 to 1. The classroom modules portion of the SOI Program continued this year. The school's 2000 SES rank in the state was 342 out of 754 for 3rd grade, and 316 out of 734 for 5th grade. Student turnover was last reported at approximately 11%. Forty-six percent of students qualified for free or reduced cost meals. Thirty-two other elementary schools are available to the community surrounding Goshen Elementary.

Goshen's SOI Lab began its 3rd year with several students continuing from the previous year. For this year, staff hours were reduced for the 3rd year SOI Technician who had been operating the Lab alone the previous year. In February, the Technician resigned from the Program, but remained in a supervisory/advisory role. The Lab continued on a reduced level, operated by 2 part time instructional aides. First and 2nd grade students were served in the morning, and fewer older grade students in the afternoon. The Lab has been in one of the school building's wings among other classrooms. Thirty-eight students were served in Goshen's Lab this year, with 30 students (80%) completing their Programs by year's end. The SOI Program at Goshen is not expected to continue next year.

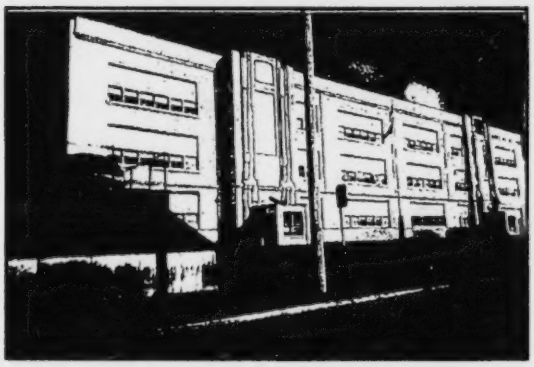

Figure 2.8: Robert Gray Elementary School, Astoria

Captain Robert Gray Elementary School is one of the original schools to pilot the SOI Program beginning in 1997-98. The school site is above Young's Bay in Astoria, population 9,813, a north coast town in Clatsop County. The nearest major city is Portland, approximately 95 miles away. The Pacific Ocean and the Columbia River border Astoria. In addition to tourism, the area's principal industries include fishing, agriculture, lumber, and kindred products, with the U.S. Coast Guard as its largest employer. The annual per capita income in Clatsop County is about $22,662.

Gray Elementary reported 267 students at year's end. Gray receives Title I services. The principal was new to the school this year, along with 5 other new staff, including a veteran special education teacher for the school's resource room. The new principal implemented a new behavior policy. SOI classroom modules continued to be implemented at Gray. Student / teacher average ratio was 19 to 1. Gray's 2000 SES rank in the state was 334 out of 754 for 3rd grade, and 296 out of 734 for 5th grade. Student turnover was last reported at 17%. Thirty-three percent of students qualified for free or reduced cost meals. Three other elementary schools are in the area.

Gray's SOI Lab completed it's 4th year in June, 2001. The Lab has been situated in the school building. One SOI Specialist served the students in the Lab, as she has done since the Program's beginning. This year's Lab

schedule was coordinated with Title I and resource room. SOI Lab enrollment for this year was 71 students, and 20 (28%) of the students completed the program. The SOI Program is expected to continue next year at some level, partially funded through the district's 21st Century grant award.

Figure 2.9: McGovern Elementary, Winston

McGovern Elementary, a Title I school, is in a residential area in Winston, population 4,613, a southwestern town in Douglas County. Close by is the larger town of Roseburg, 7 miles away. The region's principal industries are timber, mining, and agriculture, with a forest products company as the largest local employer. The annual per capita income for the county is about $20,543.

McGovern reported 483 students enrolled in grades K-5. McGovern receives Title I services. Decreased enrollment continued this year. The school's principal was in his 3rd year. SOI Program classroom modules continued to be implemented. The school acquired a new special education staff this year. Student / teacher average ratio was 18 to 1. McGovern had a low SES rank in the state: 125 of 754 for 3rd grade, and 126 out of 734 for 5th grade. Student turnover was last reported at 25%, and 60% of students qualified for free or reduced cost meals.

McGovern's SOI Lab began its 3rd year with 82 students, 56 of whom were continuing from the previous year. The SOI Specialist who began with the Program at McGovern moved to the school's special education coordinator position, and no longer worked with students in the lab. The SOI Technician continuing from the previous year assumed full time duties in the Lab, and was frequently assisted by a volunteer from the Foster Grandparent Program. The SOI Lab remained situated in its own room in one of the main building's wings, accessible through a covered courtyard space. Eighty-two students were served this year. The number of graduates of the Program was not reported. At this time, it is our understanding that the Lab portion of the SOI Program may continue next year.

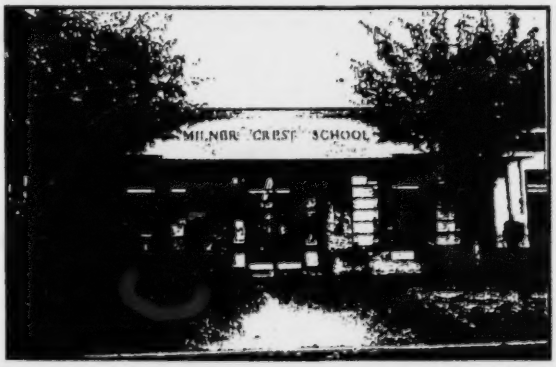

Figure 2.10: Milner Crest Elementary School, Coos Bay

Milner Crest Elementary School is in Coos Bay, population 15,374, a mid sized central coast town in Coos County. Roseburg is the nearest larger town, 90 miles to the east. Coos Bay's principal industries are wood products, fishing, tourism, agriculture, and health care, with an area hospital as its largest employer. The annual per capita income is about $21,332 in Coos County.

Milner Crest reported 247 students at grades K-5 at year end. School enrollment has decreased over the past 3 years. Milner Crest received Title I services. The school's principal had some previous SOI experience before Milner Crest joined the SOI Pilot Program 3 years ago. The school reported that this year's enrollment included a number of children from homeless and dysfunctional families. The SOI Program classroom modules were discontinued this year. Student / teacher ratio average was 18 to 1. In late Spring of 2001, Milner Crest received word from local school leaders that the school would not reopen in 2001-2002. Milner Crest's 2000 SES rank in the state was 423 out of 754 for 3rd grade, and 434 out of 754 for

5th grade. Student mobility was last reported at about 20%. Forty-seven percent of students qualified for free or reduced cost meals, about half the number reported 2 years prior. Four other public elementary schools are in the district.

The SOI Lab at Milner Crest began the 2000-01 year with substantial changes. The SOI Specialist who had operated the Lab the previous 2 years left the district. The principal, along with 1 of 2 Technicians who carried on the operation of the Lab through the year, participated in the SOI training. The principal assumed the SOI Specialist and supervisory role. The space for the SOI Lab also moved from its location in the school's cafeteria to a classroom, which served as a combination SOI Lab, Title I and special education resource room. Forty-two students were served in the Lab through the year. No students graduated the SOI Program this year. As the school is closing, so will the SOI Program at Milner Crest Elementary.

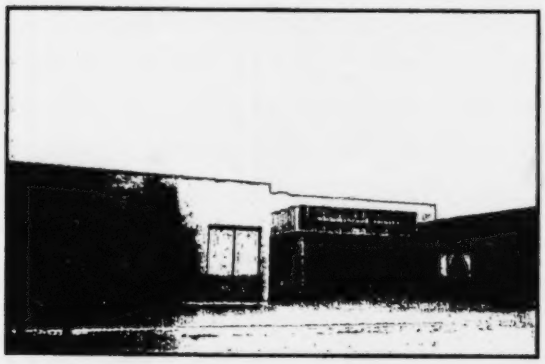

Figure 2.11: Rhododendron Elementary School, Florence

Rhododendron Elementary School is in Florence, population 7,263, a middle coast town in Lane County. Eugene is the nearest major city, approximately 60 miles east. Agriculture, education, and tourism are the county's main industries. Florence's largest employers are a lumber products company and the school district. The annual per capita income in the county is about $24,151.

Rhododendron reported 406 students in grades 3-5 at year end. The school's 3rd through 5th grade configuration is unique. Its site is shared with Rhododendron Primary School, grades K-2. Rhododendron receives Title I services. This year the principal was serving her 2nd year at Rhododendron. This year, the school adopted the Success for All program, which resulted in rescheduling for synchronized reading with all students. Several new teachers were hired for 1st, 3rd, and 5th grades, and speech. Use of the SOI Program classroom modules was optional, as was the case the prior year. Student / teacher ratio average was 20 to 1. The school's 2000 SES rank in the state was 251 out of 754 for 3rd grade, and 235 out of 734 for 5th grade. Student turnover was last reported at 14%. About 52% of students qualified for free or reduced cost meals.

This year, Rhododendron Elementary completed its 3nd year in the SOI Pilot Program. Lab began with 33 students, 20 of whom were continuing from the previous year. The Lab remained housed in the K-2 Primary building. For the second summer in a row, the Lab ran a summer session which served 15 students. The SOI Specialist of record is the principal. An SOI Technician has operated the Lab alone since it began at Rhododendron. Forty-seven students were served this year; 8 students (17%) completed the program by the end of the school year. At this time, the SOI Program at Rhododendron Elementary is expected to continue in some capacity through district funding for the 2001-2002 year.

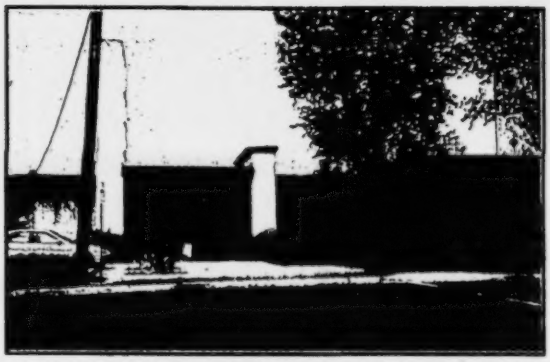

Figure 2.12: Riddle Elementary School, Riddle

Riddle Elementary School is in the town of Riddle, population 1,014, a small southwestern town in Douglas County. The nearest major city is Roseburg, approximately 25 miles away. The area's main industries are timber, mining, and agriculture, with a forest products company as Riddle's largest employer. The annual per capita income in the county is about $20,543.

Riddle Elementary reported 272 students in grades K-6 at year end. Riddle's principal was in her second year at the school. Riddle also receives Title I services. Student / teacher ratio average was 20 to 1. Three new teachers and 5 classified staff were hired. Riddle, like Adrian and Allen Dale schools, had previous experience with SOI about twenty years ago. Riddle continued to report high special education and at-risk populations. SOI Program modules continued to be implemented in classrooms. Riddle's 2000 SES rank in the state was fairly low, at 151 out of 754 for 3rd grade, and 146 out of 734 for 5th grade. The school reported student enrollment to be down a bit and student mobility to be increasing. A high 66% percent of students qualified for free or reduced cost meals. No other elementary schools are in the community.

The SOI Lab at Riddle Elementary began its 3rd year in a new room. The SOI Lab continued to be operated by the SOI Technician who alone ran the Lab last year. The Specialist who began Riddle's SOI Program continued in a supervisory role while maintaining her position as a 4th grade teacher. Fifty-five students were served in Riddle's Lab this year, 34 (62%) of whom completed the Program. The SOI Program at Riddle is not expected to continue next year.

Figure 2.13: Stella Mayfield Elementary School, Elgin

Stella Mayfield Elementary School is in Elgin, population 1,654, a small northeastern town in Union County. The nearest major town is La Grande, about 17 miles away. The area's principal industries are agriculture, lumber, and education, with a forest products company as Elgin's largest local employer. The annual per capita income in the county is about $20,272.

Stella Mayfield had 294 students at grades K-8 in 2000-01. Elgin School District's superintendent also acted as principal to Stella Mayfield this year, following the prior principal's move out of the district. The school received a class-size reduction grant, but teacher shortage, especially for the 6th grade, continued to be an issue. SOI Program classroom modules continued to be implemented this year. Student / teacher ratio average was 17 to 1. Stella Mayfield's 2000 SES rank in the state was 515 out of 754 for 3rd grade, and 539 out of 734 for 5th grade. Student turnover was last reported at 14%. About 48% of students qualified for free or reduced cost meals. Stella Mayfield is the only elementary school in the immediate area.

Stella Mayfield's SOI Lab moved this year as last year's space was needed for a regular classroom. The SOI Specialist, who worked in the Lab part time previously, went to full time regular teaching this year. The 3rd year SOI Technician continued operating the Lab. Thirty-one students were served, and 21 students completed or

nearly completed the Program by year end. The SOI Program at Stella Mayfield Elementary is not expected to continue next year.

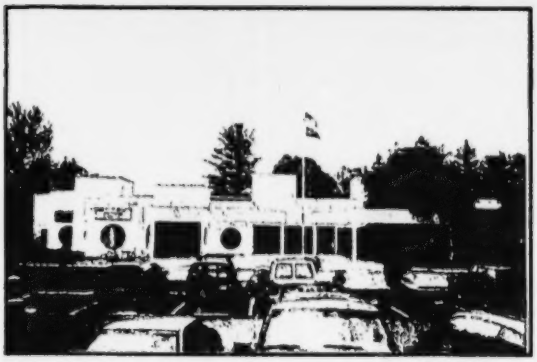

Figure 2.14: Sweetbriar Elementary School, Troutdale

Sweetbriar Elementary School is in the community of Troutdale, part of the metropolitan area around Portland. Troutdale, population 13,777, is in Multnomah County, Oregon's most populated county, with over 1 million people. In addition to being one of the nation's largest ports, another of the county's principal industries is high technology, which is also one of its largest employers. Troutdale is largely a middle class community. Annual per capita income in the county is about $30,662.

Sweetbriar Elementary School reported 520 students in grades K-5 at year end. The school is in a well-maintained residential district, and in a newer building. Teachers at Sweetbriar "loop," staying with the same students from year to year. Student / teacher ratio average was 19 to 1. SOI Program modules continued to be implemented in classrooms. Sweetbriar's 2000 SES rank in the state was high, 669 out of 754 for 3rd grade, and 665 out of 734 for 5th grade. Student turnover was last reported as low, at approximately 6%. Sixteen percent of students qualified for free or reduced cost meals. One other elementary school is in the area.

The SOI Lab at Sweetbriar completed its 3rd year, remaining in the prior year's space in the common entrance hall/cafeteria of the school's main building. The 3rd year SOI Technician operated the Lab, with the principal maintaining the role of SOI Specialist. Of the 45 students who were served this year, including holdovers from the previous year, 6 (13%) students completed their SOI Lab programs. At the time of this report it is not known whether the SOI Program will continue at Sweetbriar Elementary next year.

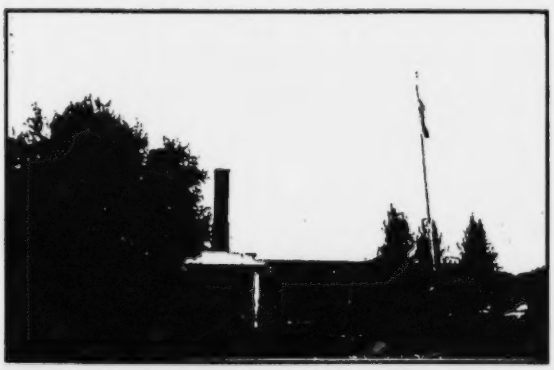

Figure 2.15: Thurston Elementary School, Springfield

Thurston Elementary School is in Springfield, population 52,864, a large mid-Willamette Valley town in Lane County. The city of Eugene is adjacent to Springfield. The principal industries in the area are agriculture, education, and tourism, with a paper products company and the school district as Springfield's largest employers. The county's annual per capita income is about $24,151.

Thurston Elementary reported 397 students in grades K-5 at year end. The school is on the edge of a residential area, and the building has large classrooms and hallways. Thurston reported many new special education students this year. SOI Program modules continued to be implemented in classrooms. Student / teacher ratio average was 20 to 1. Thurston's 2000 SES rank in the state was fairly high, at 612 out of 754 for 3rd grade, and 598 out of 734 for 5th grade. Student turnover was last reported at 16%, and 26% of students qualified for free or reduced cost meals. Fifteen other elementary schools are in Springfield.

Thurston Elementary completed its 3rd year in the SOI Pilot Program. The SOI Lab no longer shared its room with the music program, as it had in prior years. The 3rd year SOI Specialist continued working with Lab

students, yet this year on primarily a volunteer basis. An educational aide helped work with the children for 3 hours a day. The SOI Lab served 93 students this year, and about 46 students (49%) completed their programs. The SOI Program at Thurston Elementary is not expected to continue next year.

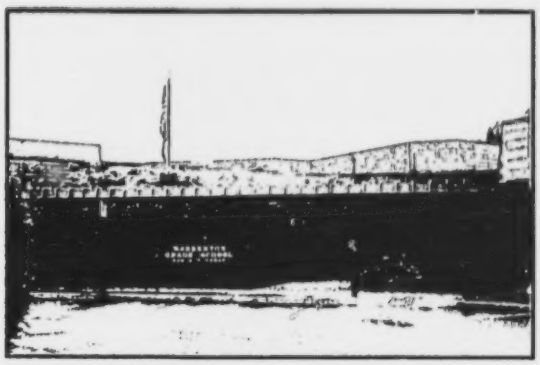

Figure 2.16: Warrenton Grade School, Warrenton

Warrenton Grade School is in the town of Warrenton, population 4,096, a northern coastal town in Clatsop County. Astoria is the nearest city, approximately 5 miles away. The principal industries in the area are fishing, lumber, agriculture, and kindred products, with a sawmill as Astoria's largest employer. The county's annual per capita income is about $22,334.

Warrenton Grade School has been the largest of the schools in the SOI Pilot Program, having 585 students in grades K-8 at year end. Warrenton receives Title I services. Student / teacher ratio average was 18 to 1. The school is in a residential area on the town's west side, not far from Fort Stevens. SOI Program modules continued to be implemented in regular classrooms this year. Warrenton's 2000 SES rank in the state was 415 out of 754 for 3rd grade, and 397 out of 734 for 5th grade. Student turnover was last reported at 13%, and about 34% of students qualified for free or reduced cost meals. No other elementary schools are in the town.

Warrenton School completed its 3rd year in the SOI Pilot Program. Also, the 3rd year SOI Specialist and Technician continued operating the Lab in the same room in the school's main building. Additionally, SOI staff took the Lab "on the road" to 3 kindergarten classrooms. Eighty-four individual and group IPP students were served this year, in addition to 62 kindergarten students. Thirteen (15%) students completed the Program this year. At this time, the SOI Program at Warrenton Elementary is not expected to continue.

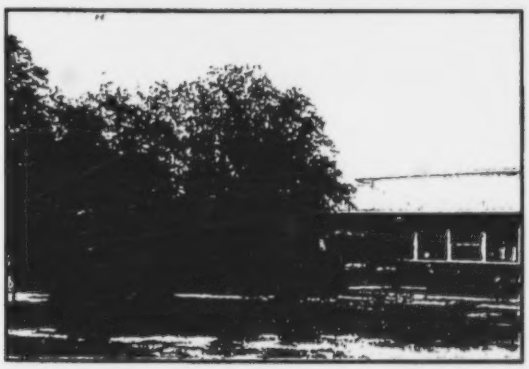

Figure 2.17: Whitworth Elementary School, Dallas

Whitworth Elementary School is in Dallas, population 12,459, a medium-sized, north-Willamette Valley town in Polk County. Salem, the state's capitol, is the nearest major city, approximately 13 miles away. The principal industries in Polk county are agriculture, forest products, and heavy manufacturing, with a producer of circuit boards as Dallas's largest local employer. The annual per capita income in the county is about $22,334.

Whitworth Elementary reported 424 students in grades K-5 at year end. Whitworth also receives school-wide Title I services. Student / teacher ratio average was 19 to 1. This year's 1st grade, however, experienced some overcrowding. Whitworth also has a behavior class. SOI Program modules continued to be used in classrooms. Whitworth's 2000 SES rank in the state was 411 out of 754 for 3rd grade, and 387 out of 734 for 5th grade. Student turnover was last reported at approximately 22%, and about 41% of students qualified for free or reduced cost meals. Three other elementary schools are in the area.

The SOI Lab at Whitworth completed its 3rd year in a modular building on school grounds. The SOI Specialist and Technician, also 3rd year, continued to operate the Lab. For the second year in a row, they served all kindergarten students; each kindergarten teacher accompanied his/her students and assisted. A total of 133

students were served in the lab this year, including 69 Kindergarteners. Twelve students (19%) completed or nearly completed their programs. At the time of this report, the SOI Program at Whitworth Elementary is not expected to continue.

SOI Program Implementation

Though not a specific question posed in the design of the evaluation of the SOI Model School Program, a description of the implementation of the Program is necessary to better understand Program effects. The issue of implementation is important for many reasons, including, importantly, the evaluation's ability to explain observed outcomes, as well as the *likelihood* that Program implementation would vary across the seventeen sites. Described here are three areas related to implementation: 1) implementation of the SOI curriculum modules by classroom teachers; 2) operation of the SOI Learning Centers within the schools; and, 3) actions taken by IDS related to materials, technical assistance, and training.

Sources of evidence the evaluation team compiled and used to describe the nature and levels of implementation include: 1) site visits by the Teaching Research evaluation team at each of the seventeen participating schools (each school was visited two times during the academic year; refer to Appendix 3 for specific dates of the site visits) during which SOI personnel and building administrators were interviewed, 2) telephone interviews with SOI personnel at each school, 3) focus group sessions held with SOI personnel from each school (2 sessions were held, April 27, 2001), and 4) classroom teacher interviews; 17 teachers from 10 schools were interviewed during the winter and spring, 2001. In keeping with a promise of confidentiality made to all school-based participants, no names or other identifying information are used in describing the implementation and technical support of the SOI Program in the participating schools.

Introduction

The 2000-2001 academic year marked the 4th year of SOI Program implementation for two of the pilot schools (Gray Elementary in Astoria and Adrian Elementary in Adrian) and the third year of implementation for the remaining fifteen schools in the pilot Program. The 2000-2001 academic year also marked the second year of the two-year contract period between the schools and IDS. For this contract period, funding to the schools from the state for the SOI Program had been reduced from previous levels. In the second year of the contract period, many of the schools experienced reductions in staff and other resources that restricted somewhat the implementation of SOI activities. In some schools, for example, module use was discontinued entirely (with IDS consent) and available dollars were directed toward operation of the lab. In other schools, personnel were reduced and many labs operated with only one person (usually an SOI Technician) rather than the previously typical two persons.

At all sites there was the recognition that this 4th year could be the final year of the Program due to uncertainties surrounding the state education budget and due to the lack of support for the Program's claims presented in the Years 2 and 3 evaluation reports. This (2001) was a legislative year, with education appropriations for the state one of the critical issues confronting the legislature, and there was broad consensus that funding for education statewide would be "tight" and that many add-on programs may not, in the end, receive state support. One SOI specialist remarked, in October, 2000, when asked "how things were going?" replied, "It's going 'fair'; [It's] hard not to be frustrated with the outcomes of the report—it doesn't feel like it's going to be here next year—'a sense of impending doom'." Despite this uncertainty and, in some cases, resignation, the 2000-2001 academic year began smoothly for most of the pilot schools. SOI Program materials generally had arrived on time. SOI specialists and technicians, and classroom teachers as well, were into their third year with the Program, so the familiarity with the Program procedures and expectations contributed to an early and generally smooth start to the academic year.

SOI Classroom Implementation

The SOI Program calls for classroom teachers to implement activity modules each day in their classrooms. These modules are designed to be implemented regularly in the classroom with all children; children attending the Lab also work on the modules in the classroom. Generally, teachers are given discretion about when and how to implement the modules. The discussion to follow regarding levels of use of the modules in the classroom draws on the following sources of information: 1) site visit interviews with building administrators

and SOI Specialists and Technicians, 2) focus group interviews with the SOI Specialists and Technicians, and 3) interviews with 17 classroom teachers at 10 pilot schools.

According to the above sources of information, variability in the levels of implementation characterized the use of classroom modules during the 2000-2001 academic year. At some schools, nearly all classroom teachers used the SOI modules on a regular or semi-regular basis, at other schools use of the modules was "optional" and implementation was spotty, while at a small cluster of schools module use was discontinued and the Program operated as a "lab only" Program.

About 8 pilot schools reported SOI module use that could be considered school wide. The general sense was that a majority of teachers within these schools used the modules fairly regularly. At one of these schools, the principal required that module use be included in teachers' lesson plans, which would be available for review: "[The] Principal asks that all [teachers] give the modules in the morning or after the noon recess."

About 6 pilot schools reported teachers using the modules occasionally, or as an optional activity. At these schools the faculty were given the discretion to use or not use the modules as they wished and as they perceived the "fit" between the module activities and the classroom curriculum. The remaining 3 schools participating as pilot schools discontinued module use and moved to a "lab only" operation. In the latter cases, the cost of the Program to the school was a critical factor in the decision to switch to the "lab only" usage. As one SOI specialist reported "We got $105,000 for two years and now [we're] running the Program for $30,000. We can have a Program here and can make a difference; not doing the modules saves a tremendous amount of money."

The variation that characterized module usage across the schools also appeared in module usage within the schools. As stated above, 8 schools reported relatively full implementation where a majority of teachers within the school used the modules on a regular basis. No school reported *all* teachers using the modules. In general, comments from the SOI Specialists and technicians, building administrators, and the classroom teachers interviewed suggested that the modules were more likely to be used in the primary (k-3) grade classrooms, with usage declining somewhat among the teachers in the upper elementary grades. The following comments from SOI Lab staff are illustrative:

"Modules in the classrooms? First grade through 3rd grades are really doing them 'by the book.' Once in a while they'll have questions about certain modules and they'll call my attention, or call my attention when they find a module they like—a good activity.....fourth and 5th kind of use [them for] free choice time. They're not always reading directions. Kids ask me, so I know they're not being taught."

"Some teachers still see modules as something kids do on their own and others have not seen the correlation between SOI and [the school] curriculum. Primary grades (kindergarten and 1st and maybe 2nd) really see the significance of it. Pressures of the standards for 3rd and 5th grades—teachers are locked in and forget to look beyond that—do certain skills that will get them there [to the benchmarks]; there are the 'visionaries' and those less able to have the vision."

How the modules were implemented within each classroom varied considerably also. Some teachers implemented the modules "by the book", as stated above. Some teachers varied their instruction to students by constructing overheads of the directions for individual modules to enhance their students' understanding of the activity, while other teachers apparently viewed the modules as "filler" and adopted a more laissez faire approach to their use. The following comments from the site visits and focus group interviews with the SOI Lab staff and interviews with the classroom teachers are illustrative:

"I haven't been checking on teachers doing their modules as much as I should be. But I think they're doing them. Fourth [grade] not much instruction—kids do them on their own, mostly. Kinders [are] doing activities. Fifth grade, I assume, is not doing a lot on them—state testing [is a] priority."

"Modules. When we get to the ones that need extra instruction, we do it as a class. Once kids understand, I assign it as morning seat work. One module with pictures they do, but when they're done we go over as a class. Class aide checks work; we re-do what's not right. First thing in the morning. Kids like some and not others—they don't like the hard ones. But ones like we're doing—have a secret message—they like those."

"Quite a few changes in teaching this year: [There's a] new ESL teacher, 2 new 4th-5th teachers, [a] teacher switch from kindergarten to [a grade] 1-2 split. Modules—they're responding to them very well—a little more interested in them. Last year 4th and 5th grade teachers used modules as "filler"—it's still happening in one room at least. Most of the new teachers are working with the modules."

"Modules? [They're] being done, but not being taught. [They're]used as a filler more than anything. We passed out a "guideline" schedule. It has helped a little."

Classroom Modules [are] going great. If there're questions, we talk with each other. One teacher is a hit and miss, but other than that, it's not too bad. Teachers really like the idea of having the full book, can make a choice [of a] module that relates to what they're doing in the classroom."

The amount of time devoted to module use also varied, both in terms of the number of days per week the modules were used and the amount of class time allotted to the modules as evidenced by the following comments from classroom teachers:

"As we come into each [module] I introduce it, discuss content—a 'big, broad, lesson' each section; name, date. We take them out of the book, look at them separately, and send them home so the parents can see. Those who are absent a lot are those who are struggling. I help with the beginning, maybe have an overhead. ESL learners have no idea what words are--the things on worksheets, so I teach logical ways to approach them. There's a lot of peer help. I don't expect all kids to be able to do them on their own. Some days we do them everyday or 2 to 3 days a week. Early on in the day more often than not as we can introduce all together then they go off on their own."

"Modules: [I] do them about 1 time per week; [the] kids work independently."

"[I] do modules 2 to 3 times a week, in the morning. Most of the time kids work at their own pace—can see as I go around who's struggling. Did have some concerns earlier with kindergarten—tracing activities and going backwards—[that's] been corrected and changed."

"A 20 to 25 minute fun experience, to start every morning—modules at 9:25 a.m., 3 times a week."

"Modules? [It's] taken a while to figure out you need to do them at a specific time each day. We do them directly after lunch, 4 or 5 days a week."

"Modules? Usually save for the last ½ hour of the day, [they] have a calming effect; we sit down and go over directions and then they do them. In beginning of the year, everyday; now 2 or 3 times per week."

"Modules: Ideally set aside a time for module use, but sometimes things come up; then we go longer—15 to 30 minutes. When doing a module [I] try to get kids to discuss *why* they're doing it—try to get them to focus on their own learning—it helps them focus and helps them outside of the module setting."

Although the teachers interviewed were consistent in their high regard for the modules and the beneficial effects they feel the children derive from them, they did acknowledge a downside to their use: time. In many cases the teachers expressed concern about the time spent on the modules detracting from instructional time in other content areas. The teachers with whom we spoke were clear that they took the Oregon Standards very seriously and recognized the impact that the state assessments have on their practice in the classroom. This impact varies somewhat by grade, with 3rd and 5th grade teachers (whose classes take the Oregon State Assessments at these benchmark grades) perhaps somewhat more immediately affected by the standards. Some of the teachers commented on how the modules can aid a student in his/her performance on the state assessments, while others were less sure of a direct correlation between the module activities and the state assessments. The teachers did feel that benefits derived by the student from participation with the modules did exist, but they were mixed on whether these benefits contributed directly or indirectly to student performance on the state assessments. These inter-related factors of time pressure due to heavy curriculum demands, uncertainty about specific contributions of the module activities to performance on the state assessments, and relative certainty about the more general

benefits students derive from use of the modules perhaps contributed to the variation in use described above. Some illustrative comments from the classroom teachers follow:

"Modules? [The kids] absolutely love most of them—[the] thinking and seeing skills are wonderful and [I] don't want to give them up. Kids are challenged by them. [I] do them whenever—3 to 4 times a week. [I] also use activities to incorporate into other things we do, especially vocabulary. Kids love them—[they] beg to do Bridges."

"[I] do think it helps them focus—reading to follow directions; [I] hardly ever have kids ask me about directions; [it] helps also with visuals in math—promotes visualization and patterns."

"I see benefits in visually tracking across, down. Also in organization and logically doing something. It's a real positive thing to do, also a positive thing to succeed at. It's nice for them to see pattern in something on their own."

"[It] takes time from other things we need to do. And scheduling is a problem. Connection to [the] benchmarks? Not really. Anything they do that stretches the brain is good, but don't know what direct connection there is."

"Benchmarks? Gut feeling—[there's] validity in that it helps them 'zero in' better—when you can't focus and pinpoint things kind of dead in the water. Don't know if there's proof there. Staff take the benchmarks and state assessments very seriously—lots of time and effort to work on the standards –'are we teaching what we need to be doing?'"

"Benchmarks? Problem solving. Looking at things in a different way. Also vocabulary would relate to the writing and shapes and letters all have to do with spelling."

"As a 3rd grade teacher there's pressure from ODE toward testing—being prepared to meet. Anything not scored or directly related to the test . . . I think all 3rd grade teachers probably feel that. It's a frustration—everything should be geared toward [the] benchmarks."

"Modules and benchmarks? [I have] not thought about that....can't answer, probably problem solving, reading directions, looking to see the picture following the text—test taking skills."

Downside? Time. Not a whole lot of preparing in a packed curriculum."

"[Modules] relate to writing benchmark[s]; also attention to details—[they're] taught not to jump to conclusions—they slow down and with state tests they need to be read carefully and attend to details. A lot of kids fail because of not paying attention to details."

"Downside? One more added curriculum. Benchmarks? Problem solving (math); some of the modules have the same step by step thinking; also in writing—descriptive words. [I] can tell that kids with 3 years of SOI are along better than those kids without it. Step by step thinking is one of the best parts of the benefits; perseverance is another thing—stay with a task until it's finished."

"State Assessments: [I'm] emphasizing reading comprehension, not here [in SOI]; but if it helps memory it will help. Also problem solving and taking the time to follow directions. Downside? So pressured, so much to do; lesson plans written for me with Open Court, 2 hours a day; math—all very much prescribed; Tuesday/Thursday afternoon to fit in Social Studies, PE, & health. Does it have benefit? Yes. I don't have enough time, that's the downside."

Both the classroom teachers we interviewed and the SOI Lab staff talked about the interaction between the SOI staff and the classroom teachers. Support for the lab was nearly unanimous among the classroom teachers. They tended to view the lab as an important fixture in their schools and one that made a useful contribution for the students who attended. Interestingly, the characteristics of the children referred from the various classrooms showed considerable variation, with some teachers referring children who could only be describe as having severe learning or behavioral issues (or both in several cases) and other teachers referring children they

perceived as lacking in a single area (e.g., handwriting) and who they felt could use a "bit of a boost." The following comments from the classroom teachers are illustrative:

"Referrals? Kids who can't stay on track—'spacey'—not on track—can't stay with me; that's a real target kid; [a kid who is] below grade level in reading and has the ability to come up to grade level; I'm hoping that what's going on is focusing and staying on track—hoping it's the inability to stay on track."

"Referrals? Kids who don't make letters well or correctly—spelling would be a problem for them. Behavior with me does not even come into it; kids I send don't have behavior problems at all."

"I look for those who are sort of lost, who consistently have trouble organizing through the day; kids who are missing it more than once. Those who should be average but functioning below—something's missing."

"Referrals made based on having difficulty in some particular academic area (not necessarily socially); especially if they're struggling in reading and language and acquisition of words."

"Referrals? Whole spectrum—behavior problems (severe) to needing a little help with academics. Not Special Ed kids though. Behaviors and more social skills—has to do with their bodies and control. Also some kids (girls) need a confidence boost."

"Referrals? [I do] not refer kids already out of the room; now I look for kids who may need a little extra help. Look for handwriting in referrals; also handwriting and neatness. [I] did refer lowest kids too."

SOI Lab Implementation

As stated previously, the Teaching Research evaluation team visited each SOI school 2 times during the 2000-2001 academic year (Fall and Winter). During these visits the evaluation team interviewed SOI Lab Specialists and Technicians and, when available, school administrators. Interviews typically covered areas of implementation, progress of children through their individual Programs, interactions with IDS, classroom teacher and other building staff reactions to the SOI Program, and the fidelity of implementation of the Program within each school.

For the majority of the SOI Lab staff in the schools the start to the academic year was smooth. Budgets were in place, this being the second year of a two year budget cycle, and the available funds for the Program were known, thus allowing delivery of material packets to the schools in a timely fashion. Uncertainty about the Program's continuation was pervasive among the SOI Lab staff. In some cases staffers indicated that they felt their administrations had already decided that the Program would not be continued after this year because the district(s) could not afford it and, in at least one instance, because "not enough lives were impacted [by the Program]." Despite this uncertainty the SOI Lab personnel generally "picked up where they left off" and began the school year by soliciting referrals and developing schedules for the children who would participate in the lab activities.

Personnel changed in some pilot schools: Milner Crest, Allen Dale, and Adrian Schools welcomed new Technicians, for example. In some schools the SOI Labs were operated by one person (usually designated a "Technician") without assistance as budgets forced reductions in staff or increased student enrollments required additional classroom teachers; at one school the SOI Lab Specialist transferred her position to Special Education Aide in mid-year, leaving the lab operation to two part-time aides under her supervision. During the initial site visits the SOI Lab staff described the start of the school as relatively uneventful, with many children "carrying over" from the previous school year. Several of the labs were moved over the summer to accommodate added classrooms in schools experiencing increases in enrollment. During the site visits and focus groups the SOI Lab staffers described the changes and start-of-the-year activities:

"Good start to the year; last year was a good year also—don't know if anything is better or worse than last year. [Last year's technician] went to full time Kindergarten aide this year."

"Materials arrived on time and in appropriate quantities...just a little short on some books, but getting them from IDS was no problem."

"New room this year; noisy and quirky ventilation. [We] moved due to enrollment—lots of room switching and teacher changes this year."

Lab started around September 20—picked up with kids who did not finish from last year, plus new kids (I was told last year to reduce numbers); now have 55 kids in lab; will probably get up to 69. Teachers a bit more choosy about referrals due to fewer numbers in the lab. 15 new kids."

Real different start of year this year—[the] school adopted a new reading Program (Success for All) which has a big time commitment—all grades are reading at the same time of the day with additional tutoring for students who are struggling. Students are ability grouped. SFA has really affected the scheduling of the lab."

"[We] moved room again—at the start of this year."

"Referrals are like pulling teeth—it's hard to work around reading time and schedule in general. [I'm] trying to get 5th and 6th graders finished and focusing on [grades] K-4."

"School started August 28; [we] began seeing students 1st week of September. Numerous students carried over from last year—lost some 8th graders and 6th graders who had made progress last year. Some do not continue because teachers felt other kids in the class need more help. [SOI Specialist is] back in the classroom [I'm] on my own this year (full time)—really no difference from last year. Lab has moved—[we] needed space for a large 6th grade class."

The SOI Specialists indicated that this past year saw a further integration of the lab into the fabric of their schools. This was seen in requests for their input into special education referrals or student staffings as well as informal conversations with teachers in the building.

"The atmosphere is more proactive. There is a new special education director who is very proactive—would like to see Special Ed kids in the lab as an intermediate step between referral and testing for special education—would like to see kids already referred in the lab to see if it helps before pursuing other special education avenues."

"Special Education now seeks help with some kids—a change in attitude—[now we] complement rather than compete. [I'm] invited into Student Services Team meetings and able to offer information there."

"Teachers talk to me; now that I am in the building they come talk to me, are more in tune, really, with which students they need to choose. [The] first year [there were] kids coming that definitely weren't good candidates."

"Teachers are doing way better this year; we got off on the right foot this year...[SOI Specialist] did a quick inservice, and [principal] followed with a "pep talk;" also [SOI Specialist] gave out a schedule for the teachers to follow (for the modules), and rearranged the order of some modules to better suit specific teachers...it's much more positive than in the past...One teacher said 'I think the teachers are really beginning to see value in the Program' and, they are keeping up with the schedule (for modules)."

"[SOI Specialist] has been here since the Program started. She's an integral part of the staff. She's good at keeping up with kids and referrals. She's good at getting information back to us and explaining to us. Kids love to come; they like the organization and it's calming. All the kids would love to come, even the TAG. It's been real positive. The consistency of the Program, the organized lab: prescribed—it's good for kids. Positive in the way it's set up. Examples for kids how to set up their own spaces. I think [SOI Specialist] is the reason it works, too. She's respected in the building." –classroom teacher.

A trend in implementation that began last year, that of SOI Lab staff working jointly with kindergarten teachers to do activities with entire kindergarten classes, continued in some schools and spread to other schools as well. This was not consistent across all schools, but approximately 6 schools developed schedules so that all kindergarten children could participate, as a class, in some of the lab activities. Schools that elected not to have all kindergarten students participate in lab activities often cited the time press as a reason for this decision:

"[The] feeling here is that Kindergarten time is very precious time (only 2 hours and 45 minutes)—a lot needs to be done during that time, so to take kids out of class for SOI is a big, big thing."

Classroom Implementation Summary

During the end of the year telephone interviews SOI Specialists and Technicians were asked to rate the fidelity of their schools in following the prescribed activities for implementing the SOI Program. A 1 to 10 rating scale was suggested with a rating of 1 representing no fidelity and a rating of 10 representing complete fidelity. Table 3.1 presents the ratings provided by SOI Specialists and Technicians for their respective schools.

Table 3.1: SOI School Staff Ratings on the Fidelity of Implementation for SOI Classroom Modules and Lab.

School	Classroom Rating	Lab Rating
1	6.5	9
2	8	8
3	8	8
4	9-10	9-10
5	NR*	8
6	8	8.5
7	7	7
8	6-7	9
9	7	7
10	NR*	8

Note. Ratings were made on a 1-10 scale with 1 being lowest fidelity implementation and 10 being highest. * Signifies a school operating with a "Lab only" Program. Note: 7 schools did not provide ratings.

As can be seen in the above ratings, the SOI staffers felt they implemented the Lab activities closely following the recommended SOI procedures. When they reported deviations from recommended procedures it was generally due to adapting certain activities to meet the unique needs of a particular child. The Lab personnel's ratings of the fidelity of classroom implementation were lower relative to the Lab implementation ratings. The Lab personnel explained their lower ratings for the classroom modules due to factors such as not all teachers implementing the modules, variation in instruction of the modules (direct teaching of module activities to 'free time independent work'), and to not all teachers having a solid commitment to the Program.

As in previous years, and despite the reported smooth running of the SOI Labs during the academic year, relatively few of the students participating in the Lab completed their Programs during the year. For this academic year approximately 35% of all students participating in the SOI Lab Program completed their Program as of the final, end of the school year telephone interview by the evaluation team. This percentage includes those children who, according to the SOI Staff, were *expected* to graduate by the end of the school year. The 35% completion rate compares favorably with the 22% completion rate reported by the SOI schools for the Year 3 evaluation and the 9.8% completion rate reported for the Year 2 evaluation. Nevertheless, this completion rate remains considerably below the rate described by SOI Program developers. "Individualized Programs were designed to be completed within 7 months, or the equivalent time span of a normal school year" (R. Meeker, personal communication, Vida, OR, November 19, 1998).

Table 3.2 presents the number of students served by the SOI Lab in each pilot school and the number of students who were reported as completing their Programs this academic year.

Table 3.2: Numbers of Children Served in SOI Learning Centers and Numbers of Completing their Programs

School	Children Served	Number Completing	Percent Completing
Adrian	46 (26 Kg.)	2	10
Allen Dale	73 gr. 1-5 72 Kg.	25	34
Bear Creek	74	12	16
Evergreen	100 (includes 3rd grade class plus TAG students)	50	50
Fairview	82	20	24
Fossil	43	43	100
Goshen	38	30	79
Gray	71	20	28
McGovern	Nr	Nr	Nr
Milner Crest	42	0	0
Rhododendron	47	8	17
Riddle	55	34	62
Stella Mayfield	Nr	Nr	Nr
Sweetbriar	45	6	13
Thurston	93 (55 K-2; 38 3rd-5th)	46	49
Warrenton	84 (plus 63 Kg)	13	15
Whitworth	133 (includes 69 Kg.)	12	19

As stated above, the completion rates reported represent an increase over the previous years' completion rates. It should be noted, however, that many of the children who completed their Programs during this academic year had been participating in the lab activities for longer than one academic year. Indeed, in some cases these children had been working in the lab for more than two years. During the focus group interviews, held in April 2001, the SOI Specialists were asked about the completion rate for children participating in the lab activities: "Over the course of the last 3-plus years, it has been apparent that children have taken longer to complete their Programs than was originally intended. In your view, why has this been the case?" The SOI Specialists generally indicated that the children referred to the lab often have more complicated learning problems, or behavior problems, than what might be seen "in a private clinic" and that the scheduling demands of a typical school week often interfere with consistent attendance in the lab. Many spoke of the difference between a public school setting and a clinic setting in describing obstacles to children completing their Programs in a more timely manner. At best the children participating in the SOI labs in the pilot schools received about 20 minutes of lab time, in groups of approximately 3 to 6 children, twice a week for a total of about 40 minutes per week instruction. Data reported during the Year 3 evaluation, provided by two SOI staffers, for example, tallied the amount of time it took some of the students who completed their Programs to actually do so. Each estimated it took the children between 40 and 45 hours to work through their Programs on a schedule of two 30-minute visits to the Lab per week. This year's focus group responses were consistent with those of previous years on the time required for students to complete their programs:

"Some have very challenging problems. And the Program is very long."

"If we could see students twice as much, think of how much we could do. We're seeing them only 2 times per week. Then they may come late, or are absent."

"If a child is not neurologically damaged, they will progress. But, if they are, they won't progress. [There] can be underlying physiological problems."

IDS Program Support

IDS maintained contact with the schools throughout this 4th year of the pilot Program, although at a somewhat reduced level. The materials, with some exceptions, arrived in a timely manner and the SOI Lab personnel were able to resume their work from the previous year with minimal interruption. IDS continued to provide site review visits to monitor implementation of the of the Program and it continued to provide telephone support for questions that arose during the year. Several of the SOI Lab staff singled out particular IDS representatives as being especially helpful in attempting to locate potential funding sources for the Program, or in attempting to smooth out problems with the ordering and/or delivery of materials packets, or in providing valuable technical assistance during the site review visits.

SOI Lab staff continued to criticize IDS for the inconsistent responses they received to their questions. The school staff felt that IDS was very responsive to their queries, and that the site review visits often provided helpful information but that too frequently inconsistencies appeared in responses to a question about a procedure in the lab: the same question often elicited contradictory responses from different IDS representatives. The SOI school staffs noted that this was a continuation of a pattern that had frustrated them in previous years.

Materials. *As stated above, materials were generally delivered on time and without complication. Where there were shortages of specific materials, IDS was quick to respond and correct the problem; in most cases the SOI Specialists were pleased with the delivery of materials, allowing them to begin lab activities soon after the school year started.*

"Materials arrived on time and in appropriate quantities...just a little short on some books, but getting them from IDS was no problem."

"IDS—called them—[had a] materials question on number and to make arrangements to trade test booklets and check on workbooks; some confusion on number of booklets. One thing [I'm] disappointed about—cannot trade last year's books—only this year's books; [I] deal with [IDS person] for materials. There's been no contact yet about site visits. The policy is different this year in trading materials—now $27 for workbooks when no materials are trade."

"Materials arrived OK—we had to order a few more packets because the numbers were a little off, but they came right away."

"[The] IDS materials arrived on time and right amount—[they're] wonderful to work with. Person there will find answers to my questions or get a message to someone who will call back."

One school experienced difficulty with the order for their materials, delaying the start of the lab activities and a second school had concerns about the materials order they received.

Training. *Given the timing of the pilot Program (its 4th year, and final year of this funding cycle) and the continuation of most of the SOI Specialists and Technicians from the previous years (where there were staffing changes the changes were more often reductions due to funding than additions of new personnel), the amount of training provided by IDS was minimal. One new SOI technician and her building principal participated in regional training held for SOI staffers. A new lab technician was trained on-site by the SOI Specialist in the building.*

"[Principal] and [SOI Specialist] felt training went very well—excellent.... [IDS person] did the training—excellent—good pacing and opportunities for asking questions."

"[New Lab Technician is so good]—she comes in and is always thinking about it—trying to work with kids and trying new ways—very enthusiastic. She's a parent and has 2 kids in the Program. We called [IDS] to ask about training; [we were] told [SOI Specialist] could do the training but [Lab Technician] couldn't do testing (SOI Specialist does testing for grades 3 – 5)."

Technical Assistance and Support. **IDS continued to provide technical assistance and support to the Program schools. This assistance and support included staff availability via telephone (1-800 number) for questions concerning implementation issues, e.g., proper procedures for a given task, or logistical concerns surrounding the materials provided. Technical assistance in the form of school site reviews was also provided: IDS representatives visited schools once this year and reviewed the operation of the SOI Lab, its physical characteristics, and procedures.**

In contrast to previous years, IDS technical assistance and support was described as more *reactive*, rather than *proactive*. SOI staff indicated they typically initiated whatever contacts there were between themselves and IDS. They continued to express gratitude and praise for the responsiveness of the IDS representatives when they called; they felt their questions were heard and responded to in a timely fashion. The SOI staff reported mixed feelings about the site review visits held during the year. Some were extremely pleased with the nature and tenor of the visit, calling them the "best yet"; others were critical, stating they felt the visit became "uncomfortable" and that communication between the IDS representative and themselves was strained. Still others wished for added insight into SOI procedures and less monitoring. In the latter case, some SOI staffers were frustrated because the IDS representative corrected them on procedures that they had previously implemented based on input from a different IDS representative. The following comments from the site visits and focus groups interviews illustrate the range of responses relevant to IDS technical assistance and support during this academic year:

"I haven't called IDS and they haven't called me."

"IDS came 2 weeks ago, the day [I] got back; went through a screening with one kid—gave some tips and was helpful with groups. From the Eugene office—a very good visit."

"No real contact with IDS—maybe a book in a box of materials—a procedures manual."

Had a site review but haven't seen the results. It's been 3 weeks. At our conference several of us suggested 1 [IDS] person come out consistently. It was amazing—not like our other site review. She had me changing things that [IDS person] changed before. Little things, but...she gave good, constructive criticism—very helpful. I can see how it would be helpful to have one person come out.

"IDS came out September--early October?... It went fine—wonderful report. Did change a couple of silly little things, like wrist band from wrist to finger tips. We called IDS today about a 2nd grader with eye teaming problem. IDS has always been very helpful when we call."

IDS—recently, came: I haven't gotten the review yet. Kind of interesting; a very different visit, and I kind of understand why. She walked through how I test—she was very much on them about using their power foot. I got the funny impression the visit was very much like a nit-picky thing. I found a few things out I had been doing wrong or differently than how I was trained. Why didn't somebody say something a long time ago? I was feeling very uncomfortable. Somebody different comes every time. [IDS person] came last year. [Different IDS person] came once the 1st year. She told me this was the last visit. She wanted to see the principal. She didn't say so when she scheduled prior to the visit. She wasn't as friendly as before."

"About site reviews: I would like to see that be more instructive. It's like pulling teeth—[IDS person]: 'sit down, tell us what we're doing wrong.' I don't want to be inspected, I want to be taught. [IDS person] didn't give me the answers I needed."

"The only time I heard from them about how things were going since December. A sales pitch: 'how are things going? Have funding? If no funding for that, how about this?' If this Program has been around since the '60s, is this why they're charging so much for this intellectual license?"

Implementation Discussion

The implementation of the SOI Program in the seventeen pilot schools during this academic year (2000-2001) was in many respects a natural continuation of the patterns of implementation established during the previous year (1999-2000) and described in the Year 3 evaluation report. In many respects the SOI Program, at whatever level of implementation in each school, was institutionalized; the Program had become part of the school routine. Those classroom teachers who implemented the modules previously continued to do so; the lab activities continued as they had previously although many SOI staffers expressed increased confidence in their abilities to understand the Program and implement it.

IDS was somewhat less visible as a presence during this 4th year. Each school's Lab was visited once for a site review, although the majority of SOI staffers found the visits to be useful. As in past years, IDS was praised for its responsiveness to queries. Also, as in past years, SOI staffers complained about inconsistencies and contradictions in specific responses to their questions. IDS personnel were viewed as knowledgeable about the Program, but as possessing inconsistent and, at times, inadequate knowledge of the realities of public schooling, which diminished their credibility with the SOI Specialists and building administrators in the pilot schools.

Finally, it was evident throughout the evaluation team's contact with SOI staff and administrators in the pilot schools that the uncertainty over Program continuation hovered over all that they did throughout year 4. This did not deter them from providing solid and consistent services to the children they taught. As the end of the school year approached and information regarding the funding outlook for the Program (and for the state budget more generally) came out, the earlier uncertainty became resignation and many of the SOI staffers stated outright that they did not expect the Program to continue without some unexpected largesse from the state legislature.

Evaluation Findings

Introduction

This section of the report addresses the findings for the SOI Program at the end of Year 4 of the program evaluation. The section is organized in 3 parts that focus in turn on 1) academic and 2) non-academic student outcomes, as well as 3) teacher outcomes. Part 1 derives from the first core question addressed by the evaluation; part 2 derives from core questions 2 through 5; and, part 3 aligns with a supplementary question posed by the evaluation.

The 5 core questions focus on:

1. Student achievement at grades 3 and 5 in Mathematics (including Math problem solving at grade 5) and Reading/Literature (including Writing at grade 5);
2. Referrals for special education assessment;
3. Behavior (disciplinary) referrals;
4. Acquisition of English for students whose first language is other than English; and,
5. School attendance.

The supplementary question addresses:

6. Teachers' satisfaction with the SOI classroom curriculum, as well as their views on the efficacy of the Program.

Each of the 3 parts of "Evaluation Findings" follows a common format:

1. The evaluation question is given, along with a brief rationale describing its importance;

2. Sources of evidence used to address the question are described. Sources of evidence include:

   - Achievement data from Oregon's statewide assessments;
   - Case studies of individual children attending the SOI Learning Centers;
   - Data collected from SOI and comparison schools using the instruments in Appendix 9;
   - Data collected during site visits to the schools, including interviews of school principals and SOI Lab staff;
   - Focus group interviews with SOI Specialists and Technicians (see Appendixes 4 and 5); and,
   - Individual interviews with classroom teachers on the efficacy of the SOI Program with regard to the student outcomes addressed.

3. Results of statistical and/or graphical analyses are presented;

4. Each of the 3 parts closes with a brief summary of the program evaluation's findings for the particular question under examination.

4.1 Student Academic Performance

Question

*Is there a significant difference in **student academic achievement in Reading and Literature and Mathematics** between schools experiencing the SOI program and similar schools that do not participate in the program?*

The SOI Program makes the claim that students' academic performance will increase in the areas of Reading/Literature, Mathematics, as well as other subject areas as measured by standardized assessment instruments selected by a district. In Oregon, this claim must be tested against the standards-based statewide assessments in reading and literature, writing, and mathematics (including math problem solving) administered in public elementary schools each spring at grades 3 and 5.

Sources of Data

Primarily, the question of possible SOI Program effects on academic achievement in reading/literature, writing, and mathematics was addressed using a quasi-experimental research design. Both SOI and matched comparison schools' 1996-1997, 1997-1998, 1998-1999, and 1999-2000 scale scores[1] on statewide assessments in reading/literature and mathematics at grades 3 and 5 had previously been collected directly from the Oregon Department of Education. In addition, ODE assessment staff provided to the evaluation team *individual student scores* for 2000-2001 in reading/literature, writing, mathematics and math problem solving for all SOI and comparison schools. This year, these data comprise 11,602 individual student records at grades 3 and 5 (7,685 student records in reading/literature and math at grades 3 and 5, and 3,917 student records in writing and math problem solving at grade 5). For each student in reading/literature and math, the data set provides an overall scale score and 7 sub-skill scores in reading/literature, and an overall scale score along with 5 sub-skill scores in math. For each student in writing (grade 5 only), the data set provides a composite score and 6 sub-skill scores. For each student in math problem solving (grade 5 only), the data set provides a composite score and 5 sub-skill scores. In keeping with appropriate practice, student names are of course removed from the data set, and the remaining data coded and stored in a secure fashion. Overall, four years of prior student achievement data along with individual student scores for the current school year in reading/literature, writing, math, and math problem solving provide sufficient data in the two academic areas, and across two Oregon benchmark grades, to judge the comparative academic effects of the SOI Program for participating schools.

Five additional sources of data were used to address the question of SOI Program effects on students' academic performance. These include:

1. Focus group responses from two groups of SOI Specialists and Technicians;
2. Observation and interview data collected from SOI Lab staff and school administrators during 34 school site visits conducted in 2000-2001;
3. Teacher survey results at mid-year, and again at the end of the school year;
4. Data from 17 individual classroom teacher interviews, conducted mainly in February, 2001;
5. Data from 17 individual student "follow-up" case studies conducted this school year (2000-2001).

Readers will also note that this first, and most critical, part of the evaluation's Year 4 findings is itself divided into three subparts, according to the grain at which the effectiveness of the SOI Pilot Program is examined.

1. First, possible academic achievement effects are examined at the level of SOI as a "program." That is, the 17 SOI elementary schools and the 17 matched comparison schools participating in the pilot program are compared *group-wise* to determine the existence of academic differences between the 2 groups (i.e., SOI schools vs. comparison schools) in reading, writing, math, and math problem solving. (Readers should

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[1] For reading/literature and mathematics, scores produced from the Oregon Statewide Assessment are based on an achievement scale widely used in the Northwest. The scale, with numbers ranging from about 150 to 300, is similar to other scales such as the Scholastic Aptitude Test (SAT) scale or other "growth" scales. Each point on the scale is at an equal distance from the previous point on the scale, so changes up or down can be charted and viewed as comparable from year to year.

further note that it is the understanding of the evaluation team that this is the *primary basis* on which the SOI Program was adopted, and is being tested, in the state of Oregon.)

2. Second, at a finer grain, academic achievement in reading and math for each SOI school is compared to its matched counterpart. These *pair-wise* comparisons provide a closer look at the academic performance of each SOI school versus its matched counterpart. As well, because the SOI Program has operated in 15 of the 17 schools for the past three school years, 3rd graders in 1997-98 and 1998-99 would in large part be 5th graders in 1999-2000 and 2000-2001, respectively. Thus, this subpart also provides a second look (the first was done last year) at the two-year growth of a cohort of elementary school students in reading and math, who together have experienced the SOI Program for at least two years.

3. Third, at a still finer level of detail, the effectiveness of the SOI Program is examined from the perspective of the *individual student*. Seventeen "follow-up" case studies of individual students who had graduated from their SOI Lab programs were conducted this year. These case studies provide the evaluation's most fine-grained look at whether and how the SOI Program might work for the individual student served in the SOI Learning Center (Lab).

4.1.1 Group-wise Comparisons

Results

Tables 4.1 through 4.6 present the statistical analyses conducted to compare the academic performance of 17 SOI schools with that of 17 matched comparison schools. For these comparisons, individual student achievement scores for 2000-01 in reading/literature and mathematics at grades 3 and 5, as well as writing and math problem solving at grade 5, were obtained directly from Oregon Department of Education assessment staff. In total, 4,068 student records for SOI schools were compared with 3,617 student records for comparison schools. The six tables are presented in order by subject and grade.

Table 4.1 gives the analyses for grade 3 reading/literature. As shown, the average SOI student score for grade 3 reading/literature was 212.62 (total scale score), versus just over 212.08 for students in comparison schools. As a first procedure, an independent samples t-test without statistical "leveling of the playing field," and with "group" (SOI vs. Comparison) as the test variable, shows that the difference in means between SOI and comparison schools is not statistically significant at the 5% level ($p = .323$).

Second, a more sophisticated statistical procedure (analysis of covariance, ANCOVA) that does level the playing field using each school's state socioeconomic rank (SES) and previous year's average score on the appropriate test as "fairness variables" (covariates) showed a different result. That is, once the effects of SES and past year's performance have been accounted for, the difference in average scores for comparison schools versus SOI schools is statistically significant at the 5% level ($p = .008$), and favors SOI school students over their comparison school counterparts. However, it should also be noted that the size of the effect in favor of SOI schools over comparison schools is small (.13 standard deviations). The effect size was estimated using guidelines provided by Hedges, Shymansky, and Woodworth (1989, p. 30) and can be interpreted as follows: these data indicate that in 3rd grade reading for 2001, with the average comparison school student achieving at the 50th percentile, their SOI pilot school counterpart on average achieved at the 55th percentile. That is, as was the case last school year favoring comparison school students, there is little practical difference between the two groups on the Oregon state assessment in 3rd grade reading/literature.

Table 4.2 gives the analyses for grade 5 reading/literature. As shown, the average SOI school student score for grade 5 reading/literature is 221.32 (total scale score), versus 221.85 for comparison school students. As a first procedure, an independent samples t-test without statistical "leveling of the playing field," and with "group" (SOI vs. Comparison) as the test variable, shows that the difference in means between SOI and comparison schools is not statistically significant at the 5% level ($p = .295$).

Second, a more sophisticated statistical procedure (ANCOVA) that does level the playing field using each school's state SES and previous year's average score on the appropriate test as "fairness variables" (covariates) showed a similar result. That is, once the effects of SES and past year's performance have been accounted for,

the difference in scores for comparison schools versus SOI schools is not statistically significant at the 5% level ($p = .445$).

Table 4.3 gives the statistical analysis for grade 5 writing. As shown, the average SOI school student score for grade 5 writing is 35.87 (composite score), versus 36.14 for comparison school students. An independent samples t-test showed no statistical difference between the two groups ($p = .288$). ANCOVA, a procedure that levels the playing field using each school's state SES and previous year's average score on the appropriate test as "fairness variables" (covariates) showed that, once SES and past year's performance have been accounted for, the difference in scores for comparison schools versus SOI schools is also not statistically significant at the 5% level ($p = .469$). That is, there is no statistical difference between the two groups—SOI and comparison schools—on the Oregon state assessment in 5th grade writing.

Table 4.4 gives the analyses for grade 3 mathematics. As shown, the average SOI student score for 3rd grade math is 208.96 (total scale score), and 207.52 for comparison school students. As a first procedure, an independent samples t-test without statistical "leveling of the playing field," and with "group" (SOI vs. Comparison) as the test variable, shows that the difference in means between SOI and comparison schools is statistically significant at the 5% level ($p = .006$). Second, a more sophisticated statistical procedure (ANCOVA) that does level the playing field using each school's state SES and previous year's average score on the appropriate test as "fairness variables" (covariates) showed a similar result. That is, once the effects of SES and past year's performance have been accounted for, the difference in average scores for comparison schools versus SOI schools is statistically significant at the 5% level ($p = .002$), and favors SOI students over their comparison school counterparts. However, it should also be noted that the size of the effect in favor of SOI schools over comparison schools is small (.14 standard deviations). The effect size can be interpreted as follows: these data indicate that in 3rd grade math for 2001, with the average comparison school student achieving at the 50th percentile, their SOI pilot school counterpart on average achieved at the 56th percentile. That is, there is little practical difference between the two groups on the Oregon state assessment in 3rd grade math.

Table 4.5 gives the analyses for grade 5 mathematics. As shown, the average SOI student score for 5th grade math is 219.96 (total scale score), versus 221.19 for comparison school students. As a first procedure, an independent samples t-test without statistical "leveling of the playing field," and with "group" (SOI vs. Comparison) as the test variable, shows that the difference in means between SOI and comparison schools is statistically significant at the 5% level ($p = .013$) and is in favor of comparison school students over their SOI counterparts.

Second, a more sophisticated statistical procedure (ANCOVA) that does level the playing field using each school's state SES and previous year's average score on the appropriate test as "fairness variables" (covariates) did not show a similar result. That is, once the effects of SES and past year's performance have been accounted for, the difference in average scores for comparison schools versus SOI schools is not statistically significant at the 5% level ($p = .313$). That is, there is no true difference, statistical or practical, between the two groups on the Oregon state assessment in 5th grade mathematics.

Table 4.6 gives the analyses for grade 5 mathematics problem solving. As shown, the average SOI student score for 5th grade math problem solving is 29.93 (total composite score), versus 30.28 for comparison school students. As a first procedure, an independent t-test without statistical "leveling of the playing field," and with "group" (SOI vs. Comparison) as the test variable, shows that the difference in means between SOI and comparison schools is not statistically significant at the 5% level ($p = .326$).

Second, a more sophisticated statistical procedure (ANCOVA) that does level the playing field using each school's state SES and previous year's average score on the appropriate test as "fairness variables" (covariates) showed a similar result. That is, once the effects of SES and past year's performance have been accounted for, the difference in average scores for comparison schools versus SOI schools is not statistically significant at the 5% level ($p = .580$). That is, there is no difference between the two groups on the Oregon state assessment in 5th grade mathematics problem solving.

In addition to the state-provided assessment data on academic achievement in reading/literature, writing, math, and math problem solving, there are four sources of data relevant to the question posed, at the level of the Program. These include 1) transcripts of focus group interviews with SOI Specialists and Technicians held during spring 2001; 2) notes from school site visits conducted by the evaluation team throughout the year; 3) results of surveys of classroom teachers conducted at the mid-point and at the end of the school year; and 4) transcripts of individual interviews conducted with 16 teachers representing 9 of the 17 SOI pilot schools.

Focus groups and site visits. In both the focus group interviews, and in school site visit interviews, SOI Specialists and Technicians were asked to relate observed instances of SOI Program impact on student academic performance. As has been the case in the past, this year's direct and indirect responses to this question were of a general rather than specific nature. Comments included generally perceived improvements for students in areas such as: focus, problem solving, self-esteem, willingness to try something new, handwriting, speech, balance, and ability to stay seated and on-task in the classroom, and in the SOI Lab. Some examples follow:

- We may see our test scores drop without the lab and modules. Teachers come and say kids are stronger doing basic foundation skills that people assume they would already know…
- Student improvement in so many areas that people—aides, teachers, parents—are noticing, and how [SOI] is overlapping into behavior and academics…
- Problem solving skills [are] so much better on state scores because of modules. Lab has helped little Johnny develop. Kids and parents of kids in lab pass the word. "It really works…"
- Vision, behavior, self – esteem, reading level, handwriting, math. Handwriting!
- I think the result is a better, well-rounded student if given according to direction…
- Allows awareness for students of [their own] strengths and weaknesses; of what areas they need to work on…Teachers tell me the same thing…Yes, it really applies to TAG kids—shows holes, gaps…

Teacher surveys. At the mid-point, and again at the end of the of the 2000-2001 school year, classroom teachers in SOI schools were surveyed as to their opinions regarding the SOI curriculum modules being used in their classrooms (see Appendixes 8 and 9). At mid-year, 93 teachers completed the survey, and 95 completed it at year's end. One item on the survey asked classroom teachers to provide their ratings of the SOI modules' helpfulness for their "students' learning generally." At mid-year, fully 92% of the teachers agreed or strongly agreed that the SOI classroom modules were helpful to their students' learning generally. However, at the end of the school year, this had moderated considerably to 61%, a level consistent with that seen in Year 3.

Teacher Interviews

Related to the current examination of academic achievement, 17 classroom teachers, representing 10 of the SOI schools, were interviewed by the evaluation team. Interview questions were aligned with the areas of possible student improvement targeted by this evaluation (see Appendix 7). For example, classroom teachers were asked to describe 1) what contribution they believe the SOI curriculum makes in preparing students to meet the Oregon standards at benchmark grades; and 2) what achievement effects for students they directly observed that they could attribute to the SOI curriculum.

The 17 classroom teachers interviewed rarely mentioned specific subject-based skills such as 'reading comprehension' or 'mathematics computation'; however, the majority indicated that the SOI curriculum prepares students for the Oregon benchmark assessments through more general improvements in their ability to "focus" on a given task, or to persist when items become challenging. The teachers also mentioned general "problem-solving" as another skill area touched by the SOI classroom curriculum. These attributes were identified as generalizing into the students' daily work in the classroom.

Table 4.1: Statistical Analyses for Grade 3 Reading/Literature

	Group	N	Mean	Std. Deviation	Std. Error Mean
Total Scale Score	SOI Model Schools	1005	212.62	11.61	.37
	Comparison School	852	212.08	11.87	.41

Independent Samples T-test

		Levene's Test for Equality of Variances		t-test for Equality of Means		
		F	Sig.	t	df	Sig. (2-tailed)
Total Scale Score	Equal variances assumed	.026	.871	.991	1855	.322
	Equal variances not assumed			.989	1792.103	.323

Tests of Between-Subjects Effects

Dependent Variable: Total Scale Score

Source	Type III Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
Corrected Model	7047.272[a]	3	2349.091	17.517	.000
Intercept	5670.063	1	5670.063	42.282	.000
SES	373.620	1	373.620	2.786	.095
RIT2000	4186.376	1	4186.376	31.218	.000
GROUP	940.396	1	940.396	7.013	.008
Error	248488.346	1853	134.101		
Total	84009360.000	1857			
Corrected Total	255535.619	1856			

a. R Squared = .028 (Adjusted R Squared = .026)

Table 4.2: Statistical Analyses for Grade 5 Reading/Literature

	Group	N	Mean	Std. Deviation	Std. Error Mean
Total Scale Score	SOI Model Schools	1020	221.32	11.39	.36
	Comparison Schools	944	221.85	11.14	.36

Independent Samples T-test

		Levene's Test for Equality of Variances		t-test for Equality of Means		
		F	Sig.	t	df	Sig. (2-tailed)
Total Scale Score	Equal variances assumed	1.681	.195	-1.047	1962	.295
	Equal variances not assumed			-1.048	1956.088	.295

Tests of Between-Subjects Effects

Dependent Variable: Total Scale Score

Source	Type III Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
Corrected Model	1715.998[a]	3	571.999	4.525	.004
Intercept	8255.191	1	8255.191	65.303	.000
SES	44.782	1	44.782	.354	.552
RIT2000	1309.304	1	1309.304	10.357	.001
GROUP	73.790	1	73.790	.584	.445
Error	247770.297	1960	126.413		
Total	96671991.000	1964			
Corrected Total	249486.295	1963			

a. R Squared = .007 (Adjusted R Squared = .005)

Table 4.3: Statistical Analyses for Grade 5 Writing

	Group	N	Mean	Std. Deviation	Std. Error Mean
Composite Total Score	SOI Schools	1012	35.87	5.75	.18
	Comparison Schools	948	36.14	5.53	.18

Independent Samples T-test

		Levene's Test for Equality of Variances		t-test for Equality of Means		
		F	Sig.	t	df	Sig. (2-tailed)
Composite Total Score	Equal variances assumed	.560	.454	-1.062	1958	.289
	Equal variances not assumed			-1.063	1956.695	.288

Tests of Between-Subjects Effects

Dependent Variable: Composite Total Score

Source	Type III Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
Corrected Model	2077.795[a]	3	692.598	22.447	.000
Intercept	1372.464	1	1372.464	44.480	.000
SES	1193.094	1	1193.094	38.667	.000
PREVPERF	476.572	1	476.572	15.445	.000
GROUP	16.165	1	16.165	.524	.469
Error	60353.192	1956	30.855		
Total	2602951.000	1960			
Corrected Total	62430.987	1959			

a. R Squared = .033 (Adjusted R Squared = .032)

Table 4.4: Statistical Analyses for Grade 3 Mathematics

	Group	N	Mean	Std. Deviation	Std. Error Mean
Total Scale Score	SOI Model Schools	1021	208.96	11.54	.36
	Comparison Schools	870	207.52	11.33	.38

Independent Samples T-test

		Levene's Test for Equality of Variances		t-test for Equality of Means		
		F	Sig.	t	df	Sig. (2-tailed)
Total Scale Score	Equal variances assumed	.307	.580	2.728	1889	.006
	Equal variances not assumed			2.732	1851.642	.006

Tests of Between-Subjects Effects

Dependent Variable: Total Scale Score

Source	Type III Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
Corrected Model	10900.933[a]	3	3633.644	28.898	.000
Intercept	802.079	1	802.079	6.379	.012
SES	203.158	1	203.158	1.616	.204
RIT2000	9111.210	1	9111.210	72.460	.000
GROUP	1255.780	1	1255.780	9.987	.002
Error	237274.001	1887	125.741		
Total	82292275.000	1891			
Corrected Total	248174.934	1890			

a. R Squared = .044 (Adjusted R Squared = .042)

Table 4.5: Statistical Analyses for Grade 5 Mathematics

	Group	N	Mean	Std. Deviation	Std. Error Mean
Total Scale Score	SOI Model Schools	1022	219.96	10.40	.33
	Comparison Schools	951	221.19	11.39	.37

Independent Samples T-test

		Levene's Test for Equality of Variances		t-test for Equality of Means		
		F	Sig.	t	df	Sig. (2-tailed)
Total Scale Score	Equal variances assumed	9.494	.002	-2.505	1971	.012
	Equal variances not assumed			-2.496	1920.349	.013

Tests of Between-Subjects Effects

Dependent Variable: Total Scale Score

Source	Type III Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
Corrected Model	3941.117[a]	3	1313.706	11.233	.000
Intercept	3395.944	1	3395.944	29.038	.000
SES	73.836	1	73.836	.631	.427
RIT2000	2996.549	1	2996.549	25.623	.000
GROUP	118.990	1	118.990	1.017	.313
Error	230273.216	1969	116.949		
Total	96205411.000	1973			
Corrected Total	234214.332	1972			

a. R Squared = .017 (Adjusted R Squared = .015)

Table 4.6: Statistical Analyses for Grade 5 Mathematics Problem Solving

	Group	N	Mean	Std. Deviation	Std. Error Mean
Composite Total Score	SOI Schools	1011	29.93	7.88	.25
	Comparison Schools	946	30.28	7.86	.26

Independent Samples T-test

		Levene's Test for Equality of Variances		t-test for Equality of Means		
		F	Sig.	t	df	Sig. (2-tailed)
Composite Total Score	Equal variances assumed	.825	.364	-.983	1955	.326
	Equal variances not assumed			-.983	1947.162	.326

Tests of Between-Subjects Effects

Dependent Variable: Composite Total Score

Source	Type III Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
Corrected Model	3179.868[a]	3	1059.956	17.543	.000
Intercept	2257.103	1	2257.103	37.356	.000
SES	323.615	1	323.615	5.356	.021
PREVPERF	1923.980	1	1923.980	31.843	.000
GROUP	18.482	1	18.482	.306	.580
Error	118002.454	1953	60.421		
Total	1893660.000	1957			
Corrected Total	121182.322	1956			

a. R Squared = .026 (Adjusted R Squared = .025)

The following quotations are illustrative of the comments made by teachers in the interviews, and include positive, equivocal, and negative viewpoints:

- Skills? I first thought, 'oh, boy, this is going to be the magic bullet!' But I haven't decided that. [The SOI modules] help with visual discrimination, vocabulary, hand-eye—working together, coordination.
- Connection to the Oregon benchmarks? Not really. Anything they [students] do that stretches the brain is good, but [I] don't know what direct connection there is.
- Benefits? Kids look at things in a different way—[I] really think of problem solving—math modules—[it] kind of comes together and reinforces that. [As for] the benchmarks, [it's] problem-solving...looking at things in a different way. Also vocabulary would relate to the writing and shapes and letters.
- Benchmarks? [I] see a connection with critical thinking and maybe also with test-taking strategies; [it] gives some strategies for being successful.
- Specific effects? Academic effects—[I'm] guessing—kids improve in memorizing math facts, handwriting, editing, [their] reading has improved. All of the students have improved and I think this is a piece of why they have improved. Behavior effects? No. Self-esteem effects? Yes.
- Benefits? [It] gets kids to focus and think about things in a different way; another way to stretch their brains.
- Benchmarks? Hopefully it helps them with auditory skills and listening. Hopefully visually [it] helps with progress in reading and writing, and of course, concentration. Concentration is needed in every curriculum area.

Thus, as reflected above, in parallel with the positive anecdotes offered, classroom teachers, consistent with most of their SOI Lab colleagues, continue to express general learning attributes rather than describing specific effects on specific content areas. These classroom teachers also expressed their difficulty separating the unique effects of the SOI Program from other influences on students. Besides normal maturation, especially in the elementary grades, many of the students served in the SOI Labs (and schools in general) receive multiple concurrent services in school, and some outside the school. Classroom teachers in particular seem to find it difficult to ascribe observed improvements for their students to the SOI Program uniquely.

Summary

When statistical differences between SOI and comparison school groups were evident (in 2 out of 6 cases) they both (3rd grade reading/literature and 3rd grade math) favored SOI schools' students over their comparison counterparts. This represents a reverse of the findings in Year 3 when 2 of 7 group comparisons statistically favored comparison school students over their SOI counterparts (3rd grade reading and 5th grade writing). However, when the sizes of the statistical differences were translated into average percentile differences, neither of this year's statistical differences seems practically or educationally important. These data therefore indicate little if any practical differences between SOI and comparison schools' academic performance at grades 3 and 5 in reading/literature, writing, math, and math problem solving.

Overall, after three and one-half year's implementation for 2 schools, and three year's implementation for 15 additional schools, there has been little discernable, systematic, or value-added effect of the SOI program on the academic achievement of Oregon's elementary school students. In other words, as measured by statewide, standardized, multiple-choice assessments in reading/literature and math, and standardized performance-based assessments in writing and math problem solving, the performance of SOI and comparison school students has been essentially the same over the 4 years during which the SOI Program operated.

However, equally consistently, SOI Lab personnel focus group and site visit data, and classroom teacher survey and interview data suggest a different, if not necessarily opposing view. Teachers and SOI Learning Center staff continue to advocate for the Program (in particular its Lab operation) and its efficacy. In terms of Program effect, SOI school personnel and teachers continue to report improvements for their students in areas such as focus and on-task behavior, "visual tracking" and most recently, in test-taking skills for 3rd and 5th graders. There also continues to be a scattered anecdotes of specific improvements related to the SOI Program for individual students, although perhaps less so this year than in previous years. Both teachers and SOI Lab personnel also continue to note the difficulty in attributing students' improvements or development over the year to the SOI Program uniquely.

4.1.2 Pair-wise Comparisons

Tables 4.7 through 4.10 present five years ('97, '98, '99, '00, and 2001) of state assessment results for each of the 17 SOI schools versus their matched comparison schools. Readers will recall that matched comparison schools were selected using variables like school size and location, school SES ranking, and school performance on state assessments in reading/literature and math at grades 3 and 5. The tables are given in turn, ordered by academic subject and grade. Also presented in each table are Oregon's statewide averages for three school years as well as group averages for the past two years for the 17 SOI schools and their matched counterparts.

It is worth noting that in examining these data, that one is comparing the performance of different groups of children over time, albeit children attending the same school. Comparisons among average performances in different years, even within one school, must therefore be approached cautiously, as it is possible that a school's high (or low) performance in any one year may be largely a function of the tested group's unusual ability rather than a function of instructional or programmatic effect.

Table 4.7 shows five years of state assessment data for grade 3 reading/literature. Points worthy of note in this table include:

1. For 2001, 9 of 17 (53%) SOI schools bettered their own previous year's average performance (down from 13 the previous year); 6 of 17 (35%) comparison schools bettered their own previous year's performance (down from 12 the previous year).

2. Six of 17 SOI schools (35%) but only 1 comparison school (6%) showed year-on-year improvement over the most recent 3-year period—the time during which the SOI Program had been implemented. The size of average improvement over the three years varied from 2 RIT scale points (McGovern) to 10 RIT scale points (Goshen).

3. Of the 2 schools participating in the SOI Program for a fourth year, one showed a small decrease from the previous year's average (Gray); and one remained at the same level as its previous year's score (Adrian).

4. In 2001, 11 of 17 SOI schools (up from 7 in 2000) outperformed their matched comparison school on the state assessment for 3rd grade reading/literature.

5. In 2001, 5 of 17 comparison schools (down from 7 in 2000) outperformed their matched SOI school on the state assessment for 3rd grade reading/literature.

Table 4.8 shows five years of state assessment data for grade 5 reading/literature. Points worthy of note in this table include:

1. For 2001, 8 of 17 (47%) SOI schools bettered their own previous year's average performance (down from 9 the previous year); 8 of 17 (47%) comparison schools bettered their own previous year's performance (the same as the previous year).

2. Two of 17 SOI schools (12%) and 2 comparison schools showed year-on-year improvement over the most recent 3-year period—the time during which the SOI Program had been implemented. The size of average improvement over the three years varied from 2 RIT scale points (Rhododendron) to 6 RIT scale points (CS1).

3. Of the 2 schools participating in the SOI Program for a fourth year, both showed moderate decreases from their previous year's averages.

4. In 2001, 9 of 17 SOI schools (up from 6 in 2000) outperformed their matched comparison school on the state assessment for 5th grade reading/literature.

5. In 2001, 8 of 17 comparison schools (up from 7 in 2000) outperformed their matched SOI school on the state assessment for 5th grade reading/literature.

Table 4.9 shows five years of state assessment data for grade 3 mathematics. Points worthy of note in this table include:

1. For 2001, 12 of 17 SOI schools (71%) bettered their own previous year's performance (up from 10 the previous year); 9 of 17 comparison schools (53%) bettered their own previous year's performance (up from 8 the previous year).

2. Eight of 17 SOI schools (47%) and 2 comparison schools (12%) showed year-on-year improvement over the most recent 3-year period—the time during which the SOI Program had been implemented. The size of average improvement over the three years varied from 3 RIT scale points (Adrian, CS3) to 11 RIT scale points (Riddle, Thurston).

3. Both of the 2 schools participating in the SOI Program for a fourth year continued to show stable (Gray) or slightly improving (Adrian) trends over the four years tabled.

4. In 2001, 10 of 17 SOI schools (up from 8 in 2000) outperformed their matched comparison school on the state assessment for 3rd grade mathematics.

5. In 2001, 6 of 17 comparison schools (down from 8 in 2000) outperformed their matched SOI school on the state assessment for 3rd grade mathematics.

Table 4.10 shows five years of state assessment data for grade 5 mathematics. Points worthy of note in this table include:

1. For 2001, 11 of 17 SOI schools (65%) bettered their own previous year's performance (up from 9 the previous year); 9 of 17 comparison schools (53%) bettered their own previous year's performance (down *from 10 the previous year*).

2. Three of 17 SOI schools (18%) and 6 comparison schools (35%) showed year-on-year improvement over the most recent 3-year period—the time during which the SOI Program had been implemented. The size of average improvement over the three years varied from 2 RIT scale points (CS9) to 12 RIT scale points (Milner Crest).

3. Of the 2 schools participating in the SOI Program for a fourth year, one showed a small decrease from the previous year's average (Gray); and one showed a moderate increase over its previous year's score (Adrian)

4. In 2001, 8 of 17 SOI schools (up from 4 in 2000) outperformed their matched comparison school on the state assessment for 5th grade mathematics.

1. In 2001, 9 of 17 comparison schools (down from 12 in 2000) outperformed their matched SOI school on the state assessment for 3rd grade mathematics.

It has been previously noted that for the Year 3 and 4 evaluations, the state's assessment of students who had been third graders in 1997-1998 and 1998-1999, and were fifth graders in 1999-2000 and 2000-2001, provided two unusually good opportunities to track the academic growth in key areas of a cohort of students who had experienced the SOI Program over at least two consecutive school years.

In Oregon, such an analysis is possible because the scale used in statewide assessments is a continuous growth scale with numbers ranging from about 150 to 300, and each point on the scale is at an equal distance from the previous point on the scale, so that changes up or down can be charted and viewed as comparable over time. Figures 4.1 and 4.2 show the growth in reading/literature and math of the second cohort of Oregon elementary students over the three years that the SOI Program has been fully in place.

As seen in Figure 4.1, 9 of 17 SOI schools showed greater *growth* from 3rd to 5th grade (1999-2001) in reading/literature than their matched counterpart schools. On the other hand 4 of 17 comparison schools showed greater growth in reading/literature than their matched SOI schools. Overall however, the average growth in reading/literature for this student cohort was very close (and not statistically different) for the two groups: 12.7 RIT scale points for SOI schools versus 11.7 RIT scale points for comparison schools. This finding is entirely consistent with that for the 1998-2000 cohort of students (SOI schools' average = 12.4; comparison schools' average = 12.9).

Table 4.7: Five-Year Trends in 3rd Grade Reading for 17 SOI Schools and their Matched Comparison Schools

	1997	1998[a]	1999	2000	2001		1997	1998	1999	2000	2001
Statewide	209	209	210	213[b]	212[b]		209	209	210	213[b]	212[b]
Adrian*	208	208	209	210	210	**CS1**	217	211	208	215	207
Allen Dale	210	207	211	214	216	**CS2**	209	210	211	215	215
Bear Creek	209	212	212	215	219	**CS3**	208	207	210	214	212
Evergreen	209	209	210	208	210	**CS4**	209	208	210	216	213
Fairview	207	209	207	208	208	**CS5**	205	203	209	205	206
Fossil	206	nr	207	214	212	**CS6**	208	206	208	213	208
Goshen	209	211	211	214	221	**CS7**	212	209	217	214	221
Gray*	212	212	208	212	210	**CS8**	211	210	209	212	207
McGovern	209	210	210	211	212	**CS9**	209	208	212	214	211
Milner Crest	209	213	209	213	215	**CS10**	212	209	210	210	213
Rhododendron	211	209	213	210	209	**CS11**	210	214	213	215	217
Riddle	207	203	205	205	211	**CS12**	205	208	207	214	212
Stella Mayfield	209	205	207	214	210	**CS13**	208	209	213	212	224
Sweetbriar	210	210	210	219	215	**CS14**	211	209	209	214	211
Thurston	210	208	209	217	217	**CS15**	210	210	210	216	209
Warrenton	211	213	211	206	212	**CS16**	208	211	213	212	214
Whitworth	205	200	203	205	211	**CS17**	206	206	209	216	210

Notes. *School participating in the pilot Program for three years; [a]Statewide assessment results prior to SOI Program; [b]Average computed from the 34 SOI and comparison schools (state average not currently available).

Table 4.8: Five-Year Trends in 5th Grade Reading for 17 SOI Schools and their Matched Comparison Schools

	1997	1998[a]	1999	2000	2001		1997	1998	1999	2000	2001
Statewide	218	218	219	221[b]	222		218	218	219	221	222
Adrian*	216	217	224	229	225	**CS1**	209	219	218	220	224
Allen Dale	217	220	223	218	224	**CS2**	219	219	222	224	223
Bear Creek	216	218	219	222	224	**CS3**	218	216	219	218	222
Evergreen	220	222	221	222	220	**CS4**	220	218	221	222	222
Fairview	218	216	217	217	219	**CS5**	215	219	217	219	222
Fossil	213	216	225	219	225	**CS6**	218	220	220	222	222
Goshen	222	219	221	226	221	**CS7**	224	220	225	224	227
Gray*	217	219	220	224	221	**CS8**	218	218	218	222	220
McGovern	217	220	221	217	221	**CS9**	215	215	219	218	219
Milner Crest	221	223	216	226	226	**CS10**	219	217	222	221	223
Rhododendron	220	218	220	221	222	**CS11**	218	218	221	219	219
Riddle	216	218	217	216	220	**CS12**	216	216	218	217	222
Stella Mayfield	217	216	219	220	219	**CS13**	223	218	224	236	224
Sweetbriar	217	218	221	222	222	**CS14**	219	218	222	221	225
Thurston	217	217	219	221	221	**CS15**	217	220	224	220	219
Warrenton	217	218	216	221	218	**CS16**	217	223	221	221	221
Whitworth	213	216	219	216	220	**CS17**	215	214	220	223	223

Notes. *School participating in the pilot Program for three years; [a]Statewide assessment results prior to SOI Program; [b]Average computed from the 34 SOI and comparison schools (state average not currently available).

Table 4.9: Five-Year Trends in 3rd Grade Mathematics for 17 SOI Schools and their Matched Comparison Schools

	1997	1998[a]	1999	2000	2001		1997	1998	1999	2000	2001
Statewide	204	205	206	208[b]	208		204	205	206	208	208
Adrian*	201	201	204	206	207	**CS1**	205	202	206	202	200
Allen Dale	204	201	205	209	213	**CS2**	202	203	206	206	210
Bear Creek	207	208	209	210	216	**CS3**	202	203	204	206	207
Evergreen	205	203	206	203	204	**CS4**	206	204	206	211	207
Fairview	201	204	203	203	206	**CS5**	203	203	203	200	202
Fossil	198	nr	208	208	203	**CS6**	200	202	204	204	206
Goshen	205	206	208	206	213	**CS7**	207	209	214	210	214
Gray*	205	205	205	207	207	**CS8**	207	204	204	207	206
McGovern	202	206	206	207	210	**CS9**	203	207	208	210	208
Milner Crest	203	202	204	208	209	**CS10**	205	208	206	206	208
Rhododendron	208	206	208	206	203	**CS11**	207	208	208	210	215
Riddle	205	198	199	206	210	**CS12**	202	202	202	207	204
Stella Mayfield	204	201	204	204	204	**CS13**	202	208	207	207	215
Sweetbriar	207	206	208	214	209	**CS14**	206	203	207	207	205
Thurston	205	205	206	212	217	**CS15**	205	206	203	210	204
Warrenton	207	208	210	203	208	**CS16**	204	207	210	208	210
Whitworth	201	200	203	204	208	**CS17**	198	203	204	208	208

Notes. *School participating in the pilot Program for three years; [a]Statewide assessment results prior to SOI Program; [b]Average computed from the 34 SOI and comparison schools (state average not currently available).

Table 4.10: Five-Year Trends in 5th Grade Mathematics for 17 SOI Schools and their Matched Comparison Schools

	1997	1998[a]	1999	2000	2001		1997	1998	1999	2000	2001
Statewide	217	218	219	220[b]	221		217	218	219	220	221
Adrian*	215	215	228	224	228	**CS1**	211	217	213	217	218
Allen Dale	214	218	219	218	220	**CS2**	219	218	219	219	225
Bear Creek	215	218	220	222	224	**CS3**	217	215	216	217	221
Evergreen	220	219	219	223	218	**CS4**	218	219	221	221	220
Fairview	216	219	215	215	218	**CS5**	215	218	217	218	221
Fossil	213	215	220	213	230	**CS6**	218	218	218	224	229
Goshen	218	221	219	222	218	**CS7**	222	221	229	225	232
Gray*	216	216	218	221	220	**CS8**	217	216	218	222	222
McGovern	214	219	218	217	221	**CS9**	213	213	216	217	218
Milner Crest	216	219	213	222	225	**CS10**	218	217	219	223	224
Rhododendron	218	217	219	220	219	**CS11**	214	218	217	219	217
Riddle	212	215	216	212	213	**CS12**	214	217	221	219	218
Stella Mayfield	216	219	220	217	218	**CS13**	219	214	219	219	224
Sweetbriar	217	218	218	220	219	**CS14**	216	217	222	224	222
Thurston	216	217	217	220	221	**CS15**	219	221	223	221	219
Warrenton	215	219	215	219	217	**CS16**	218	221	224	222	222
Whitworth	213	212	216	214	221	**CS17**	215	214	218	221	220

Notes. *School participating in the pilot Program for three years; [a]Statewide assessment results prior to SOI Program; [b]Average computed from the 34 SOI and comparison schools (state average not currently available).

Similarly, as seen in Figure 4.2, 5 of 17 SOI schools showed greater *growth* in mathematics than their matched counterpart schools. On the other hand 12 of 17 comparison schools showed greater growth in mathematics from 3rd to 5th grade than their matched SOI schools. Again however, overall, the average growth in mathematics for this 1999-2001 student cohort was almost identical for the two groups: 15.0 scale score points for SOI schools versus 15.9 scale score points for comparison schools. Again, this finding is entirely consistent with that for last year's 1998-2000 cohort of students (SOI schools' average growth = 15.4; comparison schools' average = 15.7).

Summary

In summary, these data indicate either modest or nonexistent differences between SOI and comparison schools' academic performance, depending on one's analytic approach.

If one takes the more risky, less conservative approach, namely looking at the performance of different groups of students at a particular grade and within a particular school, over time (for example, the performance of 3rd graders at Adrian Elementary in reading from 1997 to 2001), then two messages seem emergent:

1. At 5th grade, in both reading and math, there is little difference between the average performances of SOI schools and comparison schools, over the time period examined. Many of the schools in both groups have improved their average scores over time.

2. At 3rd grade, again in both reading and math, sustained improvement over the past 3 years seems more widespread among SOI schools than among comparison schools. Over the period 1999 to 2001 (three years of testing), 6 SOI schools showed sustained, yearly improvement in reading; 1 comparison school did the same. Eight (8) SOI schools showed sustained, yearly improvement in math; 2 comparison schools did the same.

Again, it should be noted that one must exercise great caution in comparing any school's year-over-year performance because one is comparing the performances of different cohorts of children. Still, it is not entirely unreasonable to expect that schools and students have become more familiar with standards and state assessments, and therefore are more able and focused in terms of instruction and assessment around standards. This approach, although perilous, is common among states.

A second, more conservative and logically defensible approach to examining performance is to track the growth of (relatively) intact cohorts of students over time. This program evaluation, because it extends over 4 years and is located in Oregon—a state that uses a growth-scaled assessment scoring system—affords this unusual opportunity, and does so twice! The finding from this approach is consistent across the two cohorts of students examined:

1. For both Grade 3 to Grade 5 cohorts (1998 (pre-SOI) to 2000, and 1999 to 2001), this evaluation found virtually no difference in the average amount of growth achieved by SOI students as contrasted with their comparison school counterparts, whether in reading/literature or in math.

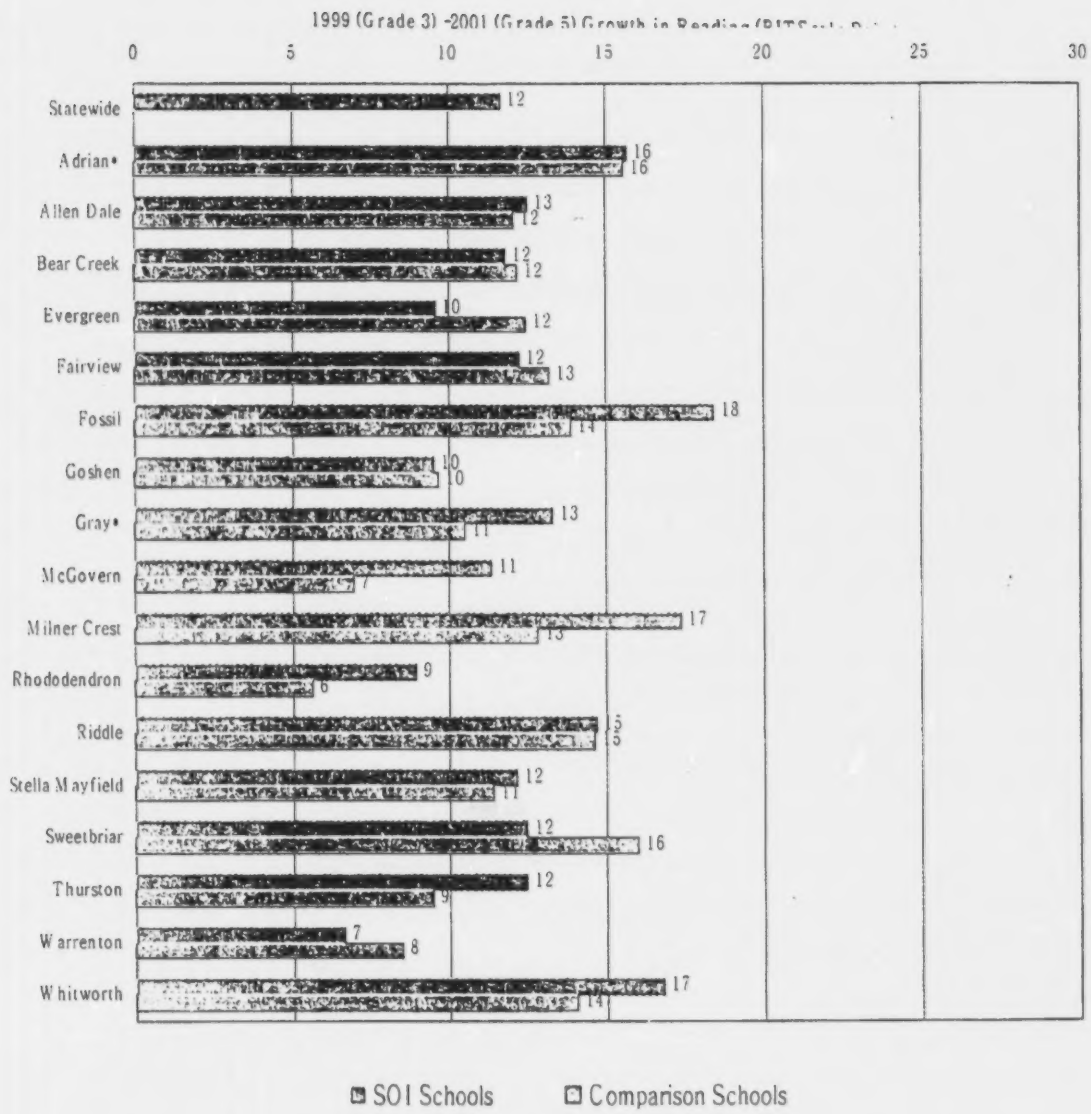

Figure 4.1: Growth in Reading from 1999-2001 for the Grade 3 to Grade 5 Cohort in 17 SOI Schools and their Matched Comparison Schools

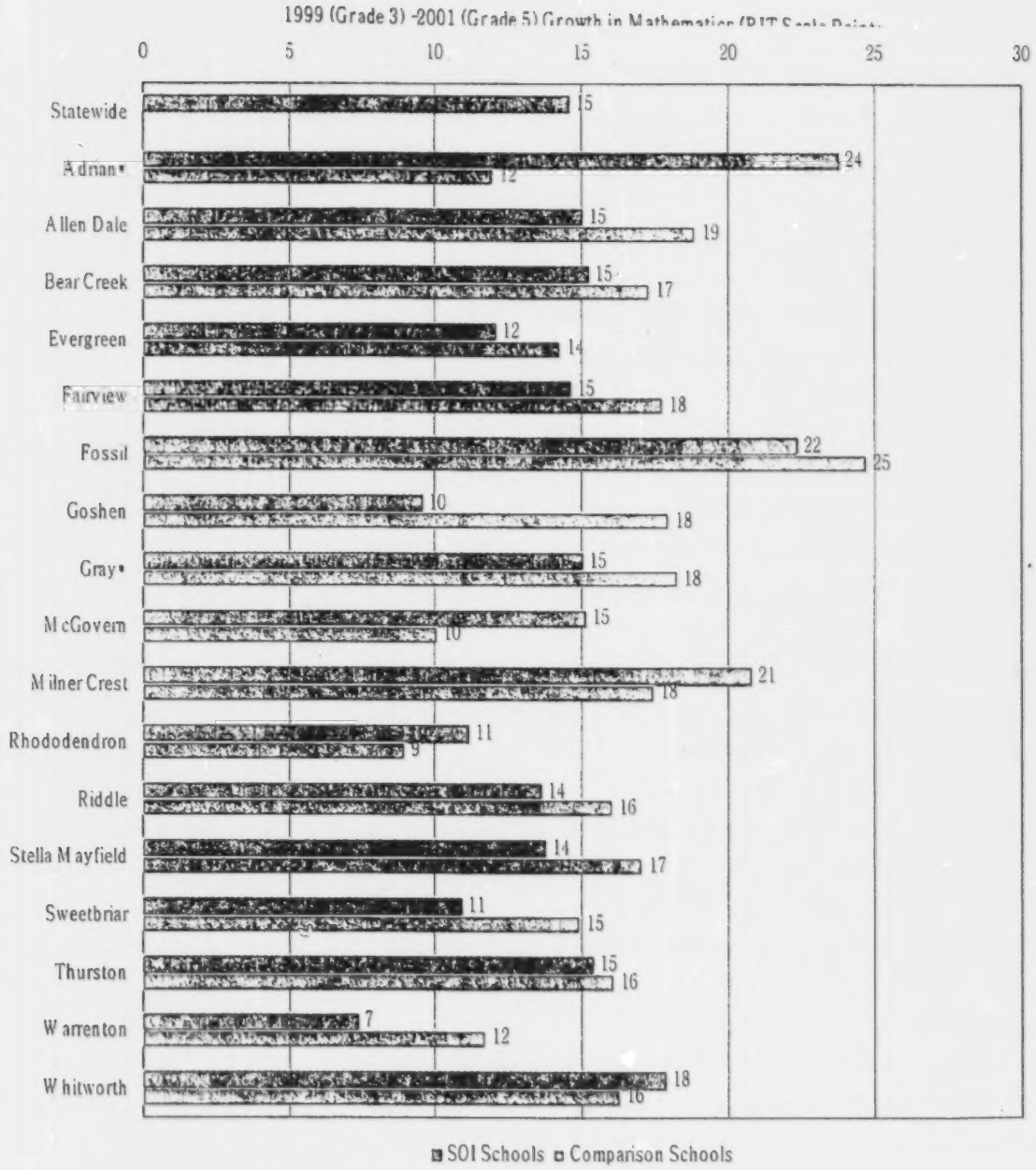

Figure 4.2: Growth in Mathematics from 1999-2001 for the Grade 3 to Grade 5 Cohort in 17 SOI Schools and their Matched Comparison Schools

4.1.3 Case Studies

Introduction

Throughout the nearly 4 years of this evaluation, in addition to group-wise (SOI vs. Comparison schools) and school pair-wise perspectives, the effectiveness of the SOI Program has been examined from the perspective of the *individual student*. Beginning in 1998, and through 1999-2000 school year, SOI Pilot Program schools were asked to nominate case study students using the following criteria: a student from the second through the fifth grade, participating in the SOI Lab Program, identified as requiring special education and receiving services, or at-risk for being referred for special education services. Case study students were observed in a variety of school settings, interviews with parents and teachers were conducted, and information was collected from file reviews.

For 2000-2001 of the SOI Pilot Program and evaluation, the Office of Special Education in Oregon's Department of Education requested a further, more enduring view of the impact of the Program on the 22 students who had participated in case studies to that point. Therefore, follow-up case studies on 17 of 22 students were conducted to determine the impact of the SOI Program. Table 4.11 below summarizes numbers of case study students involved during each period of the SOI Program from 1998 through 2001:

Table 4.11: Number of Case Study Students by Year in the SOI Pilot Program

SOI Program case study students by year			Participating in follow-up study
(1997-) 1998	1998-1999	1999-2000	2000-2001
6	(4)	(1)	**3**
	8	(2)	**7**
		8	**7**

Three students of the 6 students involved in 1998 were available for the 2000-01 follow-up case study. Of the 8 students involved beginning 1998-99, 7 were available for the follow-up. Likewise, of the 8 students beginning in 1999-2000, 7 participated in the follow-up evaluation. The decrease of 5 of the potential 22 case study students resulted from families relocating or not agreeing to a follow-up.

Follow-up information on the 17 case study students was gathered through the use of paper and pencil questionnaire. A total of 51 parents, SOI school staff, classroom teachers, and/or school specialists responded to the questionnaire, which consisted of 2 parts. Part 1 was used to collect information on case study students throughout the evaluation, and has been tailored to be relevant to the current group, and includes family, medical, school, and school performance questions depending on the recipient. Developed for the current year, part 2 of the questionnaire included a 5-point Likert scale focused on improvement in academics, behavior, and attendance, and on attention/focus and self-concept. Response to all 51 of the questionnaires was received. Thirty-eight of the 51 ratings section were completed, leaving 13 respondents who stated they knew little or nothing about the SOI Program and could not offer ratings. Results of the individual students' Oregon Statewide Assessments (OSA), Oregon PLUS (PLUS), and Oregon Achievement Tests (OAT), and special education status were also obtained during school visits. Where necessary, telephone and e-mail contact augmented the case study picture.

Summary

Of the 17 students followed in 2000-2001, 10 completed, or "graduated" from the SOI Lab portion of the Program, most after more than one academic year. Seven of the 17 students had not completed the Program,

although these students had been involved in the SOI Lab portion of the Program for 9 months or more. For one student, no information regarding SOI Program completion was reported.

Fifty-one questionnaires were distributed to 17 classroom teachers and school specialists, 17 school SOI Program staff, and 17 parents or sets of parents. Part 1 of the questionnaire asked information relevant to each of the 3 groups: classroom teachers and school-based specialists were asked to provide information on school attitude and performance; SOI Program staff were asked to provide information related to SOI Lab performance; and parents were asked to provide family, medical, school, school performance, and general information. All 51 questionnaires were returned. A detailed description of the information provided is given for each case study student in Appendix 6.

In addition to the background information section, all questionnaires included a series of questions that requested ratings focused on improvement in academics, behavior, and attendance; and in the areas of attention/focus and self-concept. Teachers and school specialists, SOI Program staff, and parents were asked to assign ratings of "excellent," "good," "fair," "poor," or "very poor" improvement on the various items. In the final analysis the number of responses (ratings) within each group (classroom teachers/school specialists, SOI Program staff, and parents) varied widely by group and by item.

For example, several classroom teachers and school specialists and SOI Program staff did not complete the ratings, indicating that they were unable due to lack of Program and/or student knowledge. Further, the following summarizes the various ratings of the three groups:

Reading:
Only 9 of the teachers and school specialists responded to the item on reading, rating improvement in students' reading from fair to good. Nine SOI Program staff also responded to the item on reading, rating improvement from good to excellent. All 17 parents responded, with 7 parents seeing fair improvement, 7 seeing good improvement, and 3 seeing excellent improvement in their children's reading.

Mathematics:
One of the classroom teachers and school specialists rated improvement in Mathematics excellent, and 8 others rated fair to good improvement seen in students' performance in Mathematics. Seven SOI Program staff rated improvement in Mathematics from good to excellent. Ten parents indicated their children showed good to excellent improvement in Mathematics, and 6 parents noted fair improvement.

Behavior, attention, and self-concept:
Of the items rated most high for improvement, teachers and school specialists indicated behavior, attention, and self-concept to be most improved, from good to excellent. SOI Program staff also rated behavior, attention, and self-concept as areas where they had seen most improvement, from good to excellent. The same was true for parents, with even more of them rating behavior, attention, and self-concept as areas of most improvement.

Ratings for the remaining items continued to be variable across the three groups. SOI Program staff responding to the items did not assign any poor or very poor ratings to any item. Two classroom teachers and school specialists noted students showed poor improvement in handwriting and attention/focus. One parent each indicated their child showed poor improvement in written expression, behavior, and attention/focus, and 2 parents indicated poor improvement in their children's handwriting. Less than half of respondents rated attendance, assigning the category as not applicable. Generally, in all categories, of the 3 groups the SOI Program staff and parents noted the highest level of improvement in all areas, while, on average, teachers' ratings ranged slightly less, from good to a fair level of improvement.

Parents offered several comments on the ratings scale worth highlighting. One respondent addressed improved motor skills, while accuracy in following directions was related by another. One parent noted that the SOI

Program assisted her child with understanding and working with her learning disability. Parents of two students volunteered they would like the program to continue, as the Program was invaluable not only for their child, but for all students. One elaborated by saying the Program was "an awesome program that demonstrated broad concepts to students."

Overall, on a global view of the responses, the perception of teachers and school specialists, SOI Program staff, and parents of case study students was that the SOI Program had a good impact on the students' progress in academics and behavioral areas.

Oregon Statewide Assessment, Oregon PLUS, and Oregon Achievement Test results were not current for all students due to non-reporting and off year grade placement. Therefore, results of performance levels were compiled from academic years 2000 and 2001 to reflect academic performance in Reading and Mathematics for 14 of the case study students (See Table 4.12). As indicated by the assessment results, 3 of the 17 case study students met standard in both Reading and Mathematics, and 4 met one standard only, 2 Mathematics and 2 Reading. Seven did not meet either the Reading or Mathematics Benchmark levels. Of the remaining 3 students, 1 was exempt from testing, and results on 2 were not available.

All but 2 (15) of the 17 students were on Individualized Educational Programs (IEPs) when they started as case studies for the SOI Program evaluation. All 15 cases continued on IEPs for the 2000-2001 academic year.

Discussion and conclusion

These 17 case studies present a view of the impact of the SOI Program on student academics and behavior. Information includes the view of classroom teachers and school specialists, SOI Program staff, and parents for the 2000-2001 year. In addition, each respondent completed a background information form. A current file review and other information were gathered to determine special education status and standardized test scores on each case study.

A correlation did not appear between completion of the SOI Program and discontinuation of an IEP. None of the case study students who completed the SOI Program had reached a level to be removed from special education services. The same could be concluded for students passing standard assessments, as only 3 case study students who completed the SOI Program met at least one of the Reading or Mathematics standards. Classroom teachers, SOI Program staff, and parent respondents to a ratings scale were more optimistic about the students' improvements in academics and behavior, giving a range of excellent to fair improvement.

Several glaring variables should be considered when looking at the results of the case study evaluation. These include the length of time each student was in the SOI Program, other services the students were receiving, and the variation in the length of treatment among the schools' SOI Programs (See Table 4.12). Some students were not given the opportunity to complete the SOI Program, as either the Program was discontinued, or students had changed to schools without an SOI Program, or were pulled out of the Program. Besides these inconsistencies in treatment, an SOI Program paper trail that followed students did not appear to exist. Further, several professionals that were currently working with students did not have enough knowledge to make a connection with the SOI Program and student progress, and therefore could not respond to the ratings scale. This lack of information weakened the global view of the impact of the SOI Program on the case study students.

Additionally, teasing out the purity of the impact of the SOI Program on the case study students was difficult because of variables within the students' academic settings and within the SOI Program. Questions that surfaced included whether or not the changes seen were a result of the SOI Program or the result of other treatments received, such as special education. Also, several of the students were on medication to assist with behavior issues. How did this treatment impact other peoples' perception of them in an academic setting? What impact did the one-on-one attention received in the SOI Lab Program have on the students? These questions and variables should be taken into account when considering the impact of the SOI Program on students.

Overall, the follow-up on the 17 case studies in Year 4 of the evaluation suggests that the SOI Program, in the opinion of the respondents to the ratings scale, had a positive impact in the areas of academics and behavior for

the majority of the 17 students. The degree of impact appeared to be small, however, on student performance on standard assessments. Moreover, in regard to the expectation made by the Program that students will "be cured of their learning disabilities" and "able to function in a regular classroom," (Meeker, Meeker, & Hochstein, 1996, p. 6) it is important to note that 15 of the case study students began their SOI Programs on IEPs and were receiving special education services, and all 15 remained on IEPs after participating in the Program. The SOI Program may not be a panacea for students who are at risk or who are identified as having special needs. It might be considered a program that fills a gap for various areas of weaknesses in students, although the ratio of gains to time and fiscal expense may be incalculable.

Table 4. 12: 2000-2001 Status of SOI Pilot Program Case Studies

	SOI Program Case Studies Follow-up Evaluation, 2000-2001																
	Case study students beginning 1999-2000							Case study students beginning 1998-1999							Case study students beginning (1997)-1998		
Status	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	15	16	17
Grade in 2000-2001	4th	4th	4th	4th	4th	4th	4th	5th	7th	7th	5th	7th	5th	5th	5th	7th	7th
Special education status	IEP	IEP	IEP	IEP	IEP	IEP	IEP	IEP	IEP	IEP	IEP	Never on an IEP	IEP	Never on an IEP	IEP	IEP	IEP
School in 2000-2001	Adrian	Evergreen	Goshen	McGovern	Milner Crest	Rhododendron	Thurston	Bear Creek	Sunset Middle	Siuslaw Middle	Sweetbriar	Pioneer Youth Corp	Waldport	Whitworth	Lewis & Clark	Astoria Middle	Vale Middle
SOI School	Adrian	Evergreen	Goshen	McGovern	Milner Crest	Rhododendron	Thurston	Bear Creek	Milner Crest	Rhododendron	Sweetbriar	Thurston	Waldport	Whitworth	Gray	Gray	Vale
Months in SOI Lab Program	32 (3 ½ years)	13	27	15	18	9	27	18	18	14 (summer included)	11	9	9	18	9	13	13
Completed SOI Program	Yes (but referred again)	Yes	No	No	No	No	Yes	No	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	No (Program discon-tinued)	Yes	Yes	Yes	nr
Year completed SOI Program	1999 (but referred again)	Spring 2000					Spring 2001		nr	Summer 2000	Fall 1999	Spring 1999		Spring 2000	Fall 1999	Spring 1999	nr
Standard test scores (NM=not met)	OSA 2000 NM Mth & Rdg	OSA 2000 NM Mth & Rdg	OSA 2000 exempt	OSA MET Mth & Rdg	OSA 2000 NM Mth & Rdg	OSA 2000 NM Mth & Rdg	OSA 2000 NM Mth & Rdg	OPLUS MET Mth & Rdg	OAT MET Mth & Rdg	OSA 2000 MET Rdg, NM Mth	OSA 2000 MET Mth NM Mod Rdg	NR	NR	OSA 2001 MET MTH, NM Rdg	OPLUS MET Mth, NM Rdg	OPLUS NM Mth & Rdg	OPLUS NM Mth & Rdg

4.2 Non-Academic Student Outcomes

This second part of "Evaluation Findings" addresses nonacademic student outcomes for students in SOI Program schools. These outcomes include 1) school-wide special education referrals (i.e., anticipated levels of use of special education services); 2) school-wide behavior (disciplinary) referrals; 3) school-wide numbers of students receiving English as a Second Language (ESL) services; and 4) school-wide attendance. As noted previously, the choice and examination of these particular student outcomes is based on the claims made for the SOI Model Schools Program by its developers and purveyors, as well as the questions asked by the State of Oregon when the pilot program was adopted (i.e., the intended conceptual, if not contractual, basis on which the Program was purchased by Oregon).

The organization of this part of "Evaluation Findings" departs somewhat from that used in previous annual reports. Previously, each nonacademic outcome had merited its own part within Section 4, on par with student achievement. This year, the four nonacademic outcomes are grouped together more tightly in the second part of Section 4. There are two reasons for this, namely:

1. In the three previous years, no statistical differences between SOI and comparison schools were detected for any of the four nonacademic outcomes; the same held true this year;

2. School-wide data on which comparisons for nonacademic outcomes are made have been directly provided to the evaluation team by the schools. For any given year of the 4-year evaluation, obtaining these data in a timely fashion proved to be more complex and challenging than initially imagined, although in the first 3 years, most SOI and comparison schools did provide the necessary data. In year 4 however, the challenge of securing school-based data was even more difficult than before. Seemingly, the strong likelihood that the SOI Program would not receive continued funding from the State of Oregon after this school year provided a substantial disincentive to the SOI schools regarding their obligation to provide data on these outcomes. Comparison schools were however under no such obligation—the provision of school-wide data was voluntary, albeit supported annually by this evaluation team with a $200.00 stipend. Thus, speculation on reasons for the non-provision of school-wide data by 9 of the 17 comparison schools that had already participated for 2 or 3 years would be just speculation. In the final analysis, 11 of 17 SOI schools, and 8 of 17 comparison schools provided data relevant to these outcomes.

Despite this organizational departure from the previous three years' reports, and the less-than-desired representativeness of school-based data, the evaluation findings for nonacademic outcomes are given in the same order used in previous years, and the presentation of each outcome follows the organization laid out at the beginning of the "Evaluation Findings" section.

4.2.1 Special Education Referrals

Question

*Is there a significant difference in the **levels of Special Education referrals** between schools experiencing the SOI Program and similar schools that do not participate in the SOI Pilot Program?*

The evaluation of the SOI Program included a comparative analysis of the rates at which students are referred for assessment for special education services. This question is of important interest because, based on SOI and IDS literature, it is a claimed benefit of the program that there would be school wide reductions in the number of students requiring special education services (IDS, 1997a; Meeker, Meeker, & Hochstein, 1996). Simply put, the evaluation sought to determine whether there would be significant differences among SOI and comparison schools in the rates at which they referred students for special education assessment. This would provide an indication of SOI Program impact on reducing the anticipated need for special education services in the schools.

Sources of Evidence

Similar to academic achievement, this question was primarily addressed using a quasi-experimental design. In previous years of the evaluation, both SOI and matched comparison schools had been asked to provide data on numbers of students referred for special education assessment. Such data had been recorded for the two years

prior to the SOI Program (1996-97, 1997-98) as well for each school year since (1998-99, 1999-00, 2000-01). (Readers will recall that although 1997-98 was indeed the first year of Program operation in the Oregon schools, it did not start until February 1998, and thus the data derived from that year are considered more "baseline" than not.) Again this year, SOI and comparison schools were asked to provide counts of students referred for special education assessment during the current school year. The form given to schools to help collect these data is included in Appendix 9.

Eight out of 17 comparison schools, and 10 of 17 SOI schools reported on numbers of students referred for special education assessment, for this school year (2000-01). This less than complete data somewhat limits the strength of evaluation conclusions drawn based solely on statistical comparisons. However, by way of comparison, 28 of the 34 schools reported data for the prior school year (1999-00), and these data are also presented. Additionally, as has been the case in previous years, statistical analyses are supplemented by interview, survey, case study, site visit, and focus group data.

From the raw data provided (counts of students referred for assessment to determine eligibility for special education services) referral rates (per 100 students) for each school were computed by dividing the number of referrals by the number of students enrolled, and then multiplying that result by 100. Table 4.13 shows the rates of special education referrals by school for 1999-00 and 2000-01.

Table 4.13: Special Education Referral Rates by School

	School size		Referral rate for '99-'00 (per 100 students)		**Referral rate for '00-'01 (per 100 students)**	
School	SOI	C	SOI	C	**SOI**	**C**
Adrian*	122	92	7.4	4.3	**10.7**	**25.0**
Allen Dale	396	342	3.3	5.3	**1.9**	**3.4**
Bear Creek	662	550	nr	14.0	**7.1**	nr
Evergreen	477	432	4.8	3.7	**4.6**	**3.2**
Fairview	454	513	5.9	4.1	**8.0**	nr
Fossil	60	120	.0	nr	nr	nr
Goshen	121	138	14.0	15.9	nr	nr
Gray*	260	412	5.0	7.3	**3.4**	**3.6**
McGovern	491	355	5.5	nr	nr	**5.1**
Milner Crest	212	367	nu	5.7	nr	nr
Rhododendron	417	459	nr	5.2	nr	nr
Riddle	309	365	nu	5.2	nr	**5.4**
Stella Mayfield	327	123	7.3	16.3	nr	nr
Sweetbriar	543	524	18.6	5.5	**12.1**	nr
Thurston	385	383	8.3	3.4	**31.5**	**3.6**
Warrenton	553	524	1.8	6.1	**5.0**	**7.2**
Whitworth	418	354	4.3	20.3	**8.0**	nr

Notes. N = 34 (17 SOI schools & 17 comparison schools); C = comparison school; *schools participating in the SOI program for a fourth school year; nr = not reported; nu = data reported but not usable.

Results

The results of our analysis of special education referral rates for SOI and comparison schools are given in Table 4.14. Each part of the table provides statistics for both this school year, and for purposes of comparison, last year as well. As shown in the table, the average referral rate in 2000-01 for 10 SOI schools is 9.2 per 100 students, versus 7.0 for 8 comparison schools. The previous year (1999-00) the averages were 6.6 for 13 SOI schools and 8.2 for 15 comparison schools. Independent samples t-tests demonstrate that the referral rates for the two groups are not significantly different this school year (2000-01), or last. In other words, despite a somewhat truncated data set, statistical comparison of the two groups of schools showed no effect of the SOI Program on rates of referral for special education assessment in 2000-01. This finding is entirely consistent with that given in all previous years of the evaluation.

In addition to the school-provided quantitative data on numbers of referrals for special education assessment, there are four sources of data relevant to the question posed, including 1) transcripts of focus group interviews with SOI Specialists and Technicians held during spring 2001; 2) notes from school site visits conducted by the evaluation team throughout the year; 3) results of surveys of classroom teachers conducted at the mid-point and at the end of the school year; and, 4) interviews with 17 classroom teachers, representing 10 of the SOI schools.

SOI Specialists and Technicians who participated in this year's focus group meetings provided little direct evidence that addresses possible special education effects of the SOI Program. It should be understood, however, that Specialists and Technicians who work in the confines of the SOI Lab likely are not in the best position to comment on changes in special education referral rates, or services for schools. Still, SOI Lab staff did offer the following comments, which speak to 1) a typically better relationship between SOI Lab staff and Special Education staff than was evident when the Program began, and 2) the perception on the part of some Lab staffs that referral rates for Special Education assessment had indeed decreased substantially.

- Staff involves me much more. [I've] been invited into Special Education team meetings. [And for] new kids on IEPs...SOI is a part [of their treatment package].
- ...Teachers, Administration, and Special Education [teachers] are becoming more dependent on SOI.
- Look how many kids would have been referred for Special Education without the help with vision, and how many have not. It was a vision problem.

Further, as noted elsewhere in this report, the SOI Labs seemed to become strongly associated with remedial efforts for children and were thus seen as a *complement* to the school's special education program, or as almost a parallel program. For example, the following comments from a classroom teacher and an SOI Technician illustrate:

- If we were able to choose, please keep that Lab, even if the Special Education department was working at its best, still keep the Lab. Because if not now, we'll pay later.
- [SOI is a] positive resource the teachers can use. [This is a] small district having its one resource that people can fall back on without IEPs and Special Education. [It's] been real positive—they're clamoring to come in; [it's] positive for the teachers and the kids...

In addition to the focus group, teacher interview, and site visit (largely anecdotal) evidence, 93 teachers who used SOI classroom modules during 2000-01 completed a "Teacher Satisfaction" survey at mid-year (December 2000 / January 2001) and 95 teachers completed the survey at the end of the school year (May / June 2001). Although not every classroom teacher responded, those that did represent most of the SOI pilot schools that continued to use classroom modules this year, and for both the mid- and end-of-year surveys constitute a statistically representative sample of the target population.

Table 4.14: Descriptive Statistics and Independent Samples T-tests of Special Education Referral Rates for SOI and Comparison Schools

Group Statistics

	Group	N	Mean	Std. Deviation	Std. Error Mean
Special Education Referral Rate 1999-2000 (per 100 students)	SOI Schools	13	6.642	4.947	1.372
	Comparison School	15	8.162	5.515	1.424
Special Education Referral Rate 2000-2001 (per 100 students)	SOI Schools	10	9.217	8.439	2.669
	Comparison School	8	7.053	7.380	2.609

Independent Samples Test

		Levene's Test for Equality of Variances		t-test for Equality of Means		
		F	Sig.	t	df	Sig. (2-tailed)
Special Education Referral Rate 1999-2000 (per 100 students)	Equal variances assumed	.793	.381	-.762	26	.453
	Equal variances not assumed			-.769	25.958	.449
Special Education Referral Rate 2000-2000 (per 100 students)	Equal variances assumed	.077	.784	.571	16	.576
	Equal variances not assumed			.580	15.831	.570

$\alpha < .05$

The "Teacher Satisfaction" survey polled teachers regarding their opinions of the SOI classroom curriculum. Specifically related to the current question, classroom teachers were asked to agree or disagree with the statement "the SOI curriculum modules were particularly helpful for my learning disabled students." At mid-year, of the 93 teacher respondents, 58% thought the curriculum modules were helpful to their students with learning disabilities (up from 53% last year); 31% were neutral (neither agree nor disagree); 7% thought the modules were not particularly helpful; and, 2% felt it was too soon to tell whether the modules were helpful or not.

At the end of the school year, these percentages were less favorable toward the SOI curriculum modules' helpfulness for special education students. Of 95 teachers, 49% thought the curriculum modules were helpful to their students with learning disabilities (about the same as last year); 39% were neutral (neither agree nor disagree); 12% viewed the modules as not particularly helpful; and, none felt it was too soon to tell whether the modules were helpful or not.

Thus consistent from mid-year to year-end, and consistent with last year's findings, just about half of the classroom teachers in SOI schools believe that the SOI curriculum is helpful for their learning disabled students. Another third are either neutral or unsure as to whether the SOI curriculum is helpful or not, and the rest believe that the SOI curriculum is not helpful.

Summary

In favor of the SOI Program, SOI Lab staff and school administrators continue to offer verbal reports of improvements (decreases) in the use of resources for special education services, i.e., reductions in the number of children referred for assessment to determine eligibility for special education services. In addition, SOI school staffs continue to note general improvements in students' focus, coordination, writing, and reading. Some SOI school staffs also commented on positive interactions with special education staff in the schools, and positive relationships with Title I school staff. Any previous less-than-positive relationships between SOI staff and special education personnel in the SOI schools seem to have improved.

Additionally, by the end of the fourth SOI year, just about one half (49%) of classroom teachers using SOI curriculum modules in their classrooms agreed or strongly agreed with the statement "the SOI curriculum modules were particularly helpful for my learning disabled students." Although this result does indicate that fully one-half of the classroom teachers surveyed remain unsure about the efficacy of the SOI curriculum, or disagree that it is helpful for students receiving special services, it does also indicate a moderately strong (if not universal) positive view of the SOI curriculum by classroom teachers.

It seems likely that the SOI Program has gained a level of acceptance among teachers and special education staff. Teachers may view the SOI Program as an additional venue for children in need of more individual help than is possible in the classroom setting. Special educators in the schools may also see the SOI Program as additional help for those students who do not qualify for special services, yet need extra help, or, as an additional diagnostic screen that helps them design better services to children.

However, despite continued testimony on positive effects for students and one or two reports of decreases in the use of school resources applied to special education, after three year's implementation for 15 schools, and three-and-a-half years for 2 schools, there is no apparent difference in the rates of special education referrals between schools experiencing the SOI Program and similar comparison schools that have not participated in the Program. **That is, at this point there continues to be no independently detectable SOI Program effect on numbers of students referred for special education assessment**. This finding is limited slightly by the lack of complete referral rate data for SOI and comparison schools. However, the finding for this year in special education referral rates is supported by the consistent absence, year-over-year, of any discernible difference between SOI and comparison schools, regardless of the identities of the schools providing data in any given year.

4.2.2 Behavior (Disciplinary) Referrals

Question

*Is there a significant difference in the **levels of behavior referrals** between schools experiencing the SOI Program and similar schools that do not participate in the SOI Pilot Program?*

Each of the four years of this evaluation of the SOI Program has included a comparative analysis of the rates at which students are referred to the school office (e.g., principal or assistant principal) for unacceptable behavior (including classroom, playground, bus, and general school behavior). This question is of important interest because, based on SOI and IDS literature, it is a claimed benefit of the program that there would be school wide improvement in the number of disciplinary referrals (IDS, 1997a). According to the BRIDGES document *Every Child Can Learn*,

> Because the BRIDGES program [SOI, our clarification] measurably improves general academic performance, the mind's ability to focus, and overall student self-respect, it has a significant impact on reducing both Special education and disciplinary referrals. (IDS, 1997a, p. 2)

And,

> ...Preliminary results also suggest that the BRIDGES program [SOI, our clarification] contributed significantly to reduced disciplinary problems, reduced costs for Special Education and has strong parental support...(IDS, 1997a, p. 5)

Simply put, this program evaluation has consistently sought to determine whether there would be significant differences among SOI and comparison schools in the rates at which they referred students for disciplinary reasons (unacceptable behavior). This would provide an indication of SOI Program impact on reducing behavior or disciplinary problems in the schools.

Sources of Evidence

Similar to the previous questions on academic achievement and special education referrals, this question was addressed using a quasi-experimental design. In previous years of the evaluation, both SOI and matched comparison schools had been asked to provide data on numbers of students referred for special education assessment. Such data had been recorded for the two years prior to the SOI Program (1996-97, 1997-98) as well for each school year since (1998-99, 1999-00, 2000-01). (Readers will recall that although 1997-98 was indeed the first year of Program operation in the Oregon schools, it did not start until February 1998, and thus the data derived from that year are considered "baseline.") Again this year, SOI and comparison schools were asked to provide counts of students referred for disciplinary infractions during the current school year. The form given to schools to help collect these data is included in Appendix 9.

Eight out of 17 comparison schools, and 11 of 17 SOI schools reported on numbers of students referred to the school office for unacceptable behavior this school year (2000-01). This less than complete data somewhat limits the strength of evaluation conclusions drawn based solely on statistical comparisons. However, by way of comparison, 31 of the 34 schools reported data for the prior school year (1999-00), and these data are also presented. Additionally, as has been the case in previous years, statistical analyses are supplemented by interview, survey, case study, site visit, and focus group data.

Table 4.15 shows the rates of disciplinary referrals by school for 1999-00 and 2000-2001. The "annual per student" unacceptable behavior referral rate was computed simply by dividing the number of behavior referrals by the number of students enrolled. This provides a behavior referral rate that may be interpreted as "the number of disciplinary referrals per student, over the school year." For example, for 1999-00, Adrian Elementary recorded 0.5 behavior referrals per student, while comparison school 1 experienced a rate of 0.7 behavior referrals per student.

Results

The results of our analysis of unacceptable behavior referral rates for SOI and comparison schools are given in Table 4.16. Each part of the table provides statistics for both this school year, and for purposes of comparison, last year as well. As shown in the table, the average referral rate in 2000-01 for 11 SOI schools is about 0.5 per

student, versus about 0.5 for 8 comparison schools. The previous year (1999-00) the averages were 0.5 per student for 16 SOI schools and 0.6 for 15 comparison schools. Independent samples t-tests demonstrate that the referral rates for the two groups are not significantly different this school year (2000-01), or last. In other words, despite a somewhat truncated data set, statistical comparison of the two groups of schools showed no effect of the SOI Program on rates of referral for unacceptable behavior in 2000-01. This finding is entirely consistent with that given in all previous years of the evaluation.

In addition to the school-provided quantitative data on numbers of referrals for unacceptable behavior, there are four sources of data relevant to the question posed, including 1) transcripts of focus group interviews with SOI Specialists and Technicians held during spring 2001; 2) notes from school site visits conducted by the evaluation team throughout the year; 3) results of surveys of classroom teachers conducted at the mid-point and at the end of the school year; and, 4) interviews with 17 classroom teachers, representing 10 of the SOI schools.

Table 4.15: Behavior Referral Rates by School

School	School size		Referral rate for '99-'00 (per student)		**Referral rate for '00-'01 (per student)**	
	SOI	**C**	**SOI**	**C**	**SOI**	**C**
Adrian*	122	44	.5	.7	.6	.8
Allen Dale	414	355	.7	.5	.6	.6
Bear Creek	566	524	.8	.3	.2	nr
Evergreen	482	408	.1	.1	.1	.1
Fairview	475	444	.1	.4	.0	nr
Fossil	58	106	.1	nr	nr	nr
Goshen	130	134	.7	.2	nr	nr
Gray*	267	393	1.0	1.2	.5	.3
McGovern	483	355	.9	nr	nr	.6
Milner Crest	247	378	.2	.5	nr	nr
Rhododendron	406	410	nr	.2	nr	nr
Riddle	272	373	.8	1.6	1.1	1.2
Stella Mayfield	294	113	.2	.5	nr	nr
Sweetbriar	520	528	.4	.3	.3	nr
Thurston	397	385	.2	.2	.3	.0
Warrenton	585	498	.6	.6	.4	.3
Whitworth	424	358	.5	2.6	.6	nr

Notes. N = 34 (17 SOI schools & 17 comparison schools); C = comparison school; *schools participating in the SOI program for a fourth year; nr = not reported.

Table 4.16: Descriptive Statistics and Independent Samples T-tests of Behavior (Disciplinary) Referral Rates for SOI and Comparison Schools

Group Statistics

	Group	N	Mean	Std. Deviation	Std. Error Mean
Behavior Referral Rate 1999-2000 (per student)	SOI Schools	16	.492	.315	7.884E-02
	Comparison Schools	15	.653	.670	.173
Behavior Referral Rate 2000-2001 (per student)	SOI Schools	11	.436	.295	8.885E-02
	Comparison Schools	8	.481	.398	.141

Independent Samples Test

		Levene's Test for Equality of Variances		t-test for Equality of Means		
		F	Sig.	t	df	Sig. (2-tailed)
Behavior Referral Rate 1999-2000 (per student)	Equal variances assumed	2.392	.133	-.862	29	.396
	Equal variances not assumed			-.844	19.622	.409
Behavior Referral Rate 2000-2001 (per student)	Equal variances assumed	.849	.370	-.286	17	.778
	Equal variances not assumed			-.272	12.321	.790

$\alpha < .05$

SOI Specialists and Technicians who participated in this year's focus group meetings did provide some anecdotal testimony that addresses possible effects of the SOI Program on improving students' behavior. Most of the testimony provided was of a general rather than specific nature.

For example, when asked about SOI Program benefits, SOI staff responded with:

- [There is] student improvement in so many areas that people—aides, teachers, parents--are noticing, and how [it (the SOI Program) is] overlapping into behavior and academics…
- [SOI improves] vision, behavior, self-esteem, reading level, handwriting, math…

SOI Specialists and Technicians also noted beneficial Program effects in terms of broadening the diagnosis of challenges that children might be experiencing. For example:

- We have lots of behavior problems in lab. Now beginning to look at kids in a different way. One kid, a behavior problem—in your face. I said, "give him to me." When I vision screened him we learned this very bright kid wasn't seeing much of anything. Now our teachers are doing better watching body and space relationships, and vision. Had a teacher come in and said, 'don't know what we're going to do without you next year.' She's become so much aware of issues, e.g., midline, now she watches kids who have difficulties. Think SOI has made teachers better observers…

On the other hand, some SOI staffers noted the sometimes-intractable nature of challenging behaviors acquired over time, as well as the importance of parental participation in changing students' behavior:

- [It is] harder for them at that point to unlearn whatever behavior they have…
- I have one kid—he was in SOI because he was privileged. His parents—they don't see a problem with his behavior—one of the "town fathers" children—very political—didn't have support at home though, so he didn't improve…

In addition, on the question as to why this evaluation has yet to detect a behavioral effect for schools, SOI staffers responded by noting changed disciplinary procedures within some schools, as well as the fact that the SOI resource center typically serves only about 20% of a school's student body at any given time. (This latter reason reflects a fairly widely held view that the school's SOI Lab essentially is the SOI Program.) Specific comments included:

- The 20% served [in lab] will show improved academics, behavior…
- [Evaluation of the Program] should focus on who is in [SOI] Lab in the areas specifically addressed by lab, including behavior…
- For us [there is a] different administration, so different behavior referral numbers…a differently structured referral policy…[this] got in the way of seeing results. [Also] Lab only hits 20% of kids; [and the evaluation] looks for school wide results…

In addition to the focus group evidence, 93 teachers who used SOI classroom modules during 2000-2001 completed a "Teacher Satisfaction" survey at mid-year (December 2000 / January 2001) and 95 teachers completed the survey at the end of the school year (May / June 2001). Although not every classroom teacher responded, those that did do represent all 17 SOI pilot schools, and for both the mid- and end of year surveys constitute a statistically representative sample of the target population.

The "Teacher Satisfaction" survey polled teachers regarding their opinions of the SOI classroom curriculum. Specifically related to the current question, classroom teachers were asked to agree or disagree with the statement "the SOI curriculum modules were particularly helpful for my students whose behavior in class had been a problem." At mid-year, of the 93 teacher respondents, 49% thought the curriculum modules were helpful for their students whose behavior had been a problem; 33% were neutral (neither agree nor disagree); 14% thought the modules were not particularly helpful; and, 4% felt it was too soon to tell whether the modules were helpful or not.

By the end of the school year, these percentages were less favorable toward the SOI Program. Of 95 teachers, 37% thought the curriculum modules were helpful for their students whose behavior had been a problem; 47% were neutral (neither agree nor disagree); 16% viewed the modules as not particularly helpful; and, 1% felt it was too soon to tell whether the modules were helpful or not.

Thus at year-end, and consistent with last year's findings, over one-third of the classroom teachers in SOI schools continue to believe that the SOI curriculum is helpful for their students with challenging behavior. Slightly less than one-half, are either neutral or unsure as to whether the SOI curriculum is helpful or not, and the rest either believe that the SOI curriculum is not helpful.

In Year 4, 17 teachers were offered the opportunity to comment on the efficacy of the SOI Program through individual interviews, in addition to their views on the SOI curriculum captured by the Teacher Satisfaction survey. As noted previously, this interview comprised open-ended questions aligned with the questions addressed by this evaluation. On the issue of potential improvements in classroom or school behavior, these teachers—while generally laudatory of the SOI Program and staff—did not credit the Program with improved student behavior. A sample of comments illustrates:

- Grade 3 teacher: "Kids like going to Lab. There's no stigma; "fun thing to do." They like [SOI staff person]. Behavior? It's no problem to get them there. I don't know how SOI relates to behavior. One student is being assessed for ADD. Didn't make him do SOI Lab this year, because he fought it last year..."

- Grade 3 teacher: "[I] don't see big changes in behavior problem kids—don't see SOI changing that..."

- Grade 3 teacher: "Behavior? [I] don't know...not really keeping track, can't answer that one. When [SOI staff person] is doing SOI in the room, kids enjoy it and are successful. [It has been] a big help with this class this year; just hope we're funded again...

- Grade 4 and 5 blend teacher: "The kind of student I would refer? It would be a kid whose spelling is off; handwriting is a tell-tale thing: hand-eye [coordination]; I don't see it as a behavior issue—[but]...a kid who's acting out, having a hard time—I don't know if SOI would be the thing to change behavior. I think I need to modify what's done in class to correct behavior..."

- Grade 5 teacher: "All of the students have improved and I think this is a piece of why they have improved. Behavior [effects]? No. Self-esteem? Yes."

Summary

Consistent with previous years of this pilot Program and evaluation, SOI Lab staff continued to provide general advocacy for the improvement of students' behavior as a result of the SOI Program. However, in contrast to previous years, many among the SOI school staffs noted that this effect (like others claimed for the Program) would most likely be seen within the 20% of the school students served by the SOI Lab, and not necessarily in the overall student body.

Classroom teachers were less sanguine than their SOI Lab colleagues in terms of observed benefits of the SOI Program on students' behavior. Survey-wise, by the end of the '00-'01 school year, just over one-third of teachers using SOI curriculum modules in their classrooms agreed or strongly agreed with the statement "The SOI curriculum modules were particularly helpful for my students whose behavior in class had been a problem." More pointedly, the 17 classroom teachers interviewed generally did not view the SOI Program as one that would result in positive changes in students' behavior.

Thus, despite continued advocacy, mainly from SOI school staff, and positive ratings for the SOI curriculum from about one-third of participating teachers, at the current time there is no statistical difference in levels of behavior referrals between schools experiencing the SOI Program and similar schools that have not participated in the SOI Pilot Program. That is, **at this point, there continues to be no independently detectable SOI Program effect in terms of reducing disciplinary referrals for schools**. This finding is consistent with that reported for all previous years of the program evaluation, and supported by the views of the classroom teachers interviewed this school year.

4.2.3 English Language Acquisition

Question

*Is there a significant difference in **language acquisition rates for students with English as a second language** between schools experiencing the SOI Program and similar schools that do not participate in the SOI Pilot Program?*

This evaluation of the SOI Program included a comparative analysis of the numbers of students receiving English as a Second Language (ESL) services in SOI and comparison schools, and the time needed for students to transition through ESL programs (an indicator of students' rate of English language acquisition). This question is of interest because IDS literature states:

> ...because the SOI Model School blueprint comprises methods and materials by which students may maximize their learning abilities to their natural potential, this program does increase the probability that students will learn more and perform better in all subject areas. (IDS, 1997b, p. 1)

Thus, the Oregon Department of Education's request for proposal (ODE, January 1998) noted that the third-party program evaluation should address "the rate of growth in language acquisition for students with English as a second language" (p. 13).

Sources of Evidence

Similar to the previous questions, this question was addressed using a quasi-experimental design. In previous years of the evaluation, both SOI and matched comparison schools had been asked to provide data on numbers of students classified as ESL, and receiving ESL program services. Such data had been recorded for the two years prior to the SOI Program (1996-97, 1997-98) as well for each school year since (1998-99, 1999-00, 2000-01). (Readers will recall that although 1997-98 was indeed the first year of Program operation in the Oregon schools, it did not start until February 1998, and thus the data derived from that year are considered "baseline.") Again this year, SOI and comparison schools were asked to provide counts of students classified as ESL, and receiving ESL program services during the current school year. The form given to schools to help collect these data is included in Appendix 9.

Seven out of 17 comparison schools, and 11 of 17 SOI schools reported on numbers of students classified as ESL, and receiving ESL services this school year (2000-01). This less than complete data somewhat limits the strength of evaluation conclusions drawn based solely on statistical comparisons. However, by way of comparison, 31 of the 34 schools reported data for the prior school year (1999-00), and 30 of 34 reported data for the 1998-99 school year, and these data are also presented.

Table 4.17 presents numbers of students classified as ESL and receiving services, as averages for the two years prior to full program implementation, and for the three years during SOI Program use. In addition to the school data shown in Table 4.17, a number of informal interviews with school principals during site visits to the schools did provide needed insight into the changes in numbers of students classified as ESL over the course of a school year.

Results

Comparing the numbers of children served by ESL programs in the schools, and the time required for program transition is challenging. According to school principals, in many schools, changes in the numbers of ESL students are due to the annual migration (primarily to and from Texas) of mainly Mexican farm workers. For example, in the Ontario area the migration south happens around mid-October, or when the weather starts to get cold, as the housing at the camps is not heated. Similarly, another principal pointed out that "numbers [of ESL students] change as students are mobile." And, an SOI Lab Specialist noted that, "No students leave 'ESL status' during the year since testing is done only in the Fall...any change in numbers reflects only the mobility of families."

Table 4.17: Numbers of Students Classified ESL by School and Year

School	Average no. for '97-'98		Average no. for '99-'01		Net change in '99-'00		Net change in '00-'01	
	SOI	C	SOI	C	SOI	C	SOI	C
Adrian*	24	0	18	0	2	0	-1	0
Allen Dale	8	nr	0	9	0	0	0	5
Bear Creek	15	nr	44	109	4	24	-5	nr
Evergreen	13	18	18	12	3	-6	-8	-1
Fairview	51	112	133	149	22	-7	-7	nr
Fossil	11	0	0	0	0	nr	nr	nr
Goshen	5	nr	0	0	0	0	nr	nr
Gray*	12	0	5	0	-1	0	0	nr
McGovern	15	6	0	5	0	nr	nr	-2
Milner Crest	16	1	8	0	-3	0	nr	nr
Rhododendron	6	nr	0	14	nr	3	nr	nr
Riddle	14	13	0	8	0	-6	0	-1
Stella Mayfield	7	nr	0	2	0	1	nr	nr
Sweetbriar	11	nr	21	18	1	-2	0	nr
Thurston	8	0	1	1	0	-2	-3	0
Warrenton	7	0	2	0	0	0	0	0
Whitworth	15	nr	12	5	2	0	0	0

Notes. N = 34 (17 SOI schools & 17 comparison schools); C = comparison school; *school participating in the SOI program for a fourth school year; nr = not reported.

The essential point here is that in many cases that show seemingly notable changes in numbers of ESL students served, these changes were due to the movement into and out of school of students accompanying migrant or mobile parents.

It was further noted in discussion with school principals that although "testing out" of ESL programs does happen, it is a rare event. Typically, once children are classified or qualified for ESL services, they retain that classification until they leave the school, or no longer qualify because of a change in residency status. This is borne out by the data provided by some SOI and comparison schools on the reasons for students leaving ESL services during the 1998-99 school year. As seen in the Year 2 evaluation report, only Whitworth Elementary and comparison school 14 reported students exiting ESL programs because they had been evaluated (or reevaluated) and found to no longer require ESL services.

The data presented in Table 4.17 are useful in understanding the size of schools' ESL programs and the context of each school participating in the evaluation. However, these data do not seem to provide, as intended, guidance on the question as to whether the SOI Program affects the rate at which ESL students acquire English language. That is, from the data collected to this point, the evaluation can address this question only indirectly by saying that for SOI schools which do provide ESL services, the rate of student exit from those services currently appears no different from the rate at which student exit programs at other schools. That is, for SOI

schools that also serve children for whom English is a second language, there has been no notable or discernible exodus of students from ESL services.

Table 4.18: Descriptive Statistics and Independent Samples T-tests of Net Changes in Numbers of Students Classified ESL by School and Year for SOI and Comparison Schools

Group Statistics

	Group	N	Mean	Std. Deviation
ESLNET98	SOI Schools	15	-.60	6.21
	Comparison Schools	15	.87	10.01
ESLNET99	SOI Schools	16	1.88	5.61
	Comparison Schools	15	.33	7.14
ESLNET00	SOI Schools	11	-2.18	3.09
	Comparison Schools	7	.14	2.27

Independent Samples Test

		Levene's Test for Equality of Variances		t-test for Equality of Means		
		F	Sig.	t	df	Sig. (2-tailed)
ESL Net Change 98-99	Equal variances assumed	.308	.584	-.482	28	.633
	Equal variances not assumed			-.482	23.378	.634
ESL Net Change 99-00	Equal variances assumed	.110	.742	.671	29	.508
	Equal variances not assumed			.666	26.583	.511
ESL Net Change 00-01	Equal variances assumed	2.562	.129	-1.710	16	.107
	Equal variances not assumed			-1.835	15.543	.086

$\alpha < .05$

This point is further underscored by the statistical comparisons given in Table 4.18, that compare net changes in the average numbers of students classified as ESL for SOI and comparison schools. As shown in Table 4.18, the average net changes for both SOI and comparison schools have been relatively small and consistent over the three full years that the SOI program has been in place. For example, on average, SOI schools lost 1, gained 2, and lost 2 students classified as ESL for 1998-99, 1999-00, and 2000-01, respectively. As noted above, this consistency for this particular group of schools over time, most likely reflects the fact that in many areas of Oregon, children who typically receive ESL services appear to be predominantly children of families that are quite mobile, and who typically do not remain in one place for a time sufficient to fully transition through ESL offerings.

Summary

From the data collected and analyses conducted, the evaluation has learned that the numbers of ESL students schools serve are part of the unique context of each school, and can vary widely within each school over the course of a school year. However, if counted at a consistent point in time from year to year, the numbers of ESL children served by a particular school are reasonably stable over time, and largely dependent on geography. That is, observed changes in ESL numbers seem mainly due to the mobility of children and their families rather than to graduation from ESL services, although this does happen in rare cases. Therefore, in the evaluation of the SOI Program, the question as to whether the program has a beneficial effect on language acquisition rates is only indirectly addressed, by the observation that over the three-year course of the Program in Oregon, net changes in the numbers of students classified as ESL were small and consistent over time for both SOI and comparison schools.

4.2.4 School Attendance (Average Daily Attendance)

Question

*Is there a significant difference in **attendance rates** between schools experiencing the SOI Program and similar schools that do not participate in the SOI Pilot Program?*

Each year, this evaluation of the SOI Program included a comparative analysis of the attendance rates reported by SOI and comparison schools. This question is of important interest because, based on SOI and IDS literature, it is a claimed benefit of the Program that there would be school wide improvements in attendance (i.e., reductions in rates of absenteeism, IDS, 1997b, p. 3). Simply put, the evaluation sought to determine whether there would be significant differences in rates of student attendance among SOI and comparison schools, across time, that would provide an indication of SOI Program impact in the schools.

Sources of Evidence

Similar to previous questions, this issue was addressed using a quasi-experimental design. In previous years of the evaluation, both SOI and matched comparison schools had been asked to provide data on school attendance. Such data had been recorded for the two years prior to the SOI Program (1996-97, 1997-98) as well for each school year since (1998-99, 1999-00, 2000-01). (Readers will recall that although 1997-98 was indeed the first year of Program operation in the Oregon schools, it did not start until February 1998, and thus the data derived from that year are considered "baseline.") Again this year, SOI and comparison schools were asked to provide attendance data during the current school year. The form given to schools to help collect these data is included in Appendix 9.

Eight out of 17 comparison schools, and 11 of 17 SOI schools reported on average daily attendance this school year (2000-01). This less than complete data somewhat limits the strength of evaluation conclusions drawn based solely on statistical comparisons. However, by way of comparison, 31 of the 34 schools reported data for the prior school year (1999-00), and these data are also presented and statistically compared. Additionally, as has been the case in previous years, statistical analyses are supplemented by interview, survey, case study, site visit, and focus group data.

Table 4.19 shows attendance rates by school for 1998-99, 1999-00, and 2000-01, the three years during which the SOI Program has been fully in place. The raw attendance rates given in Table 4.19 demonstrate the high degree of stability observed in the rates for these schools. Most of the schools have remained in a band between about 93% and about 95% over the course of the SOI Program.

From these raw data, 2 "change in attendance rate" indices have been calculated, simply by subtracting each school's 1996-1999 3-year average from the school's attendance rate for 1999-2000, and by subtracting each school's 1996-2000 4-year average from the school's attendance rate for 2000-2001. These attendance change indices provide reasonable measures of any deviation in attendance patterns using previous school years as a baseline. Thus, two years worth of attendance data have been statistically compared for this report: raw attendance rates and change indices for the current school year (11 SOI schools vs. 8 comparison schools), and raw attendance rates and change indices for the previous school year (16 SOI schools vs. 15 matched comparison schools). The lack of complete data limits somewhat the strength of evaluative conclusions drawn. However, in addition to school wide student attendance rates, data from focus groups, information gathered from interviews with school staff during site visits, and data from the SOI teacher interviews and surveys (Appendixes 5, 7 and 8) are considered for possible indications of Program effect on student attendance.

Results

The results of our analysis of changes in attendance rates for SOI and comparison schools are given in Table 4.20. As shown in the table, the average attendance rate for 16 SOI schools in 1999-00 was just over 94%, versus just under 95% for 15 comparison schools. This year, the average attendance rate for 11 SOI schools was just under 94%, while the average attendance rate for 8 comparison schools was very similar at just over 94%. As shown in the statistical comparisons given in Table 4.20, there is no difference between these raw attendance rates for SOI and comparison schools, either this school year, or in the previous year.

Table 4.19: Attendance Rates by School and by Year

School	School size		Attendance for 98-99		Attendance for 99-00		**Attendance for 00-01**	
	SOI	**C**	**SOI**	**C**	**SOI**	**C**	**SOI**	**C**
Adrian*	122	44	94.0	94.1	94.0	nr	93.8	93.3
Allen Dale	414	355	96.0	94	95.0	nr	95.4	nr
Bear Creek	566	524	nr	96.8	94.0	nr	93.7	nr
Evergreen	482	408	94.5	93.1	94.0	94.3	93.7	94.0
Fairview	475	444	nr	93.7	93.3	94.2	93.0	nr
Fossil	58	106	93.9	91.0	93.7	nr	nr	nr
Goshen	130	134	94.6	94.7	94.8	94.9	nr	nr
Gray*	267	393	93.4	nr	93.8	94.0	94.0	93.8
McGovern	483	355	91.2	94.0	93.3	nr	nr	94.8
Milner Crest	247	378	94.6	95.8	94.6	96.0	nr	nr
Rhododendron	406	410	93.1	95.6	nr	95.0	nr	nr
Riddle	272	373	92.3	94.7	94.1	95.0	92.5	94.0
Stella Mayfield	294	113	89.5	95.6	98.1	97.0	nr	nr
Sweetbriar	520	528	nr	95.5	94.0	95.3	93.5	nr
Thurston	397	385	94.7	95.5	94.5	95.3	94.8	95.5
Warrenton	585	498	nr	94.3	93.8	94.5	93.9	93.3
Whitworth	424	358	nr	92.7	94.8	92.9	94.3	nr

Notes. N = 34 (17 SOI schools & 17 comparison schools); C = comparison school; *school participating in the SOI program for a fourth year; nr = not reported.

Also given in Table 4.20 are the results of an independent samples t-test that compared the change in attendance rate indices for 12 SOI schools versus 12 matched counterparts for which data were available. A similar result was found when the comparison was conducted for current year change in attendance rate. In other words, t-tests on both raw attendance rates, and on change indices, showed no effect of the SOI Program on attendance rates in 1999-2000, or in 2000-2001. This finding is entirely consistent with that given in previous years of the evaluation.

Table 4.20: Descriptive Statistics and Independent Samples T-tests of Attendance Rates for SOI and Comparison Schools

Group Statistics

	Group	N	Mean	Std. Deviation
Attendance Rate 1999-2000	SOI Schools	16	94.35	1.12
	Comparison Schools	12	94.86	1.02
Attendance Rate Change from 3-Year Baseline Average	SOI Schools	12	.72	1.33
	Comparison Schools	12	.29	.87
Attendance Rate 2000-2001	SOI Schools	11	93.87	.79
	Comparison Schools	7	94.10	.80
Attendance Rate Change from 4-Year Baseline Average	SOI Schools	11	-.05	.47
	Comparison Schools	7	-.15	.80

Independent Samples Test

		Levene's Test for Equality of Variances		t-test for Equality of Means		
		F	Sig.	t	df	Sig. (2-tailed)
Attendance Rate 1999-2000	Equal variances assumed	.006	.939	-1.236	26	.228
Attendance Rate Change from 3-Year	Equal variances assumed	1.124	.301	.954	22	.350
Attendance Rate 2000-2001	Equal variances assumed	.037	.849	-.592	16	.562
Attendance Rate Change from 4-Year	Equal variances assumed	3.246	.090	.324	16	.750

$\alpha < .05$

The results of the teacher satisfaction surveys administered this school year indicate that of the 93 teachers at mid-year, and 95 at year-end, 82% and 67%, respectively, agreed or strongly agreed that the SOI curriculum modules were enjoyed by their students. These numbers are very similar to those compiled last year. In addition, at the focus groups and during site visits, the SOI school staff were in universal agreement that their students enjoyed very much attending the SOI Lab. These may be indicators that the SOI classroom modules and Lab provide some motivation for students to be in school, and thus provides some slight rationale that attendance for SOI schools could improve in comparison to schools that do not use the SOI Program.

Occasionally, but less consistently this school year, the evaluation team did encounter an anecdote supporting the idea that the Program enhances attendance or motivation to attend. For example, one grade 3 teacher related "...this year I have 4 Lab kids (girls); last year 7 or 8. They go at different times. One kid who had terrible attendance--now attendance has shot way up, and confidence level goes up. They're excited about it. [SOI Lab staff person] lets Lab kids give directions on activities they've done in the Lab..."

However, during the focus group meeting SOI school staff also offered the following point of view, speaking to claims that had been made about the effects of the Program, as well as the evaluation of those claims:

- "How can it [the SOI Program] affect attendance? There are kids moving in and out; little kids getting themselves to school—how can SOI change that? Our school has huge turnover. I am so surprised with the whole-school evaluation. Three out of 4 children we have we don't have much to do with attendance, academics, and behavior..."

Summary

There is little anecdotal evidence of the effect of the SOI Program on student attendance in the schools. Also, statistical analysis shows consistently that there is no difference in current year attendance rates, or in change in attendance rates, between schools experiencing the SOI Program and similar schools that have not participated in the SOI Pilot Program. **At this time, there is no independently detectable SOI Program effect in terms of improved attendance rates for schools.**

4.3 Teacher Views

Question

This evaluation of the SOI Program included an assessment of the levels of satisfaction classroom teachers experienced with the SOI Program generally, and with the SOI curriculum modules specifically. In essence, we sought to understand teachers' views about the SOI Program based on their use of the SOI curriculum modules and interaction with the SOI school staffs, and further, we sought to determine whether teachers are able to report benefits of the Program for their students.

Sources of Evidence

Two sources of evidence have been brought to bear on this question. The first is the results of a teacher satisfaction survey administered at about the mid-point of the academic year and again at year-end. Also in Year 4, 17 teachers representing 10 SOI schools were offered the opportunity to comment on the efficacy of the SOI Program, in addition to their views on the SOI curriculum captured by the Teacher Satisfaction survey. This opportunity took the form of face-to-face interviews with two members of the evaluation team, comprised mainly of open-ended questions aligned with the questions addressed by this evaluation. Each interview began with the evaluators explaining the interview's purpose and the importance of teachers' responses in developing a comprehensive picture of the SOI pilot program.

Results

Teacher Satisfaction Survey. The teacher satisfaction survey is comprised of statements related to the benefits for students claimed by IDS and the SOI Program, as well as statements to do with the usability of the SOI curriculum modules. The survey contained the following 7 statements:

The SOI curriculum modules are:

1) *easy to use;*
2) *enjoyable to teach;*
3) *enjoyed by my students;*
4) *helpful for my students' learning generally;*
5) *particularly helpful for my learning disabled students;*
6) *particularly helpful for my students whose behavior in class had been a problem; and*
7) *satisfying for me as a teacher.*

A 6 point rating scale was provided (0 = too early to tell; 1 = strongly disagree; 2 = disagree; 3 = neither agree nor disagree; 4 = agree; 5 = strongly agree). The survey was circulated in December 2000 and/or January 2001 and again in the latter part of the academic year in May 2001. Ninety-three (93) teachers responded to the mid-year circulation; 95 teachers responded to the end-of-year administration. The results of the two administrations (mid-year and end-of-year) are presented in Figures 4.3 and 4.4.

In many cases, the results in the two figures represent perhaps a moderating of classroom teachers' views over the course of the academic year, toward the SOI Program and its effects. For example, in viewing the percentage of teachers responding positively (agree or strongly agree) to the item concerning the helpfulness of the SOI modules for "*students' learning generally*" 76% responded positively at mid-year and 61% responded positively at year-end. Similar response patterns occurred on the items "*particularly helpful for my learning disabled students*" (58% to 49% positive) and "*particularly helpful for my students whose behavior in class had been a problem*" (49% to 37%).

Overall, the survey statements can be grouped by ease of use, enjoyment, and general levels of satisfaction (statements 1-3 and 7) and by observed SOI curriculum effects for students (statements 4, 5, and 6). These results are given in Table 4.21.

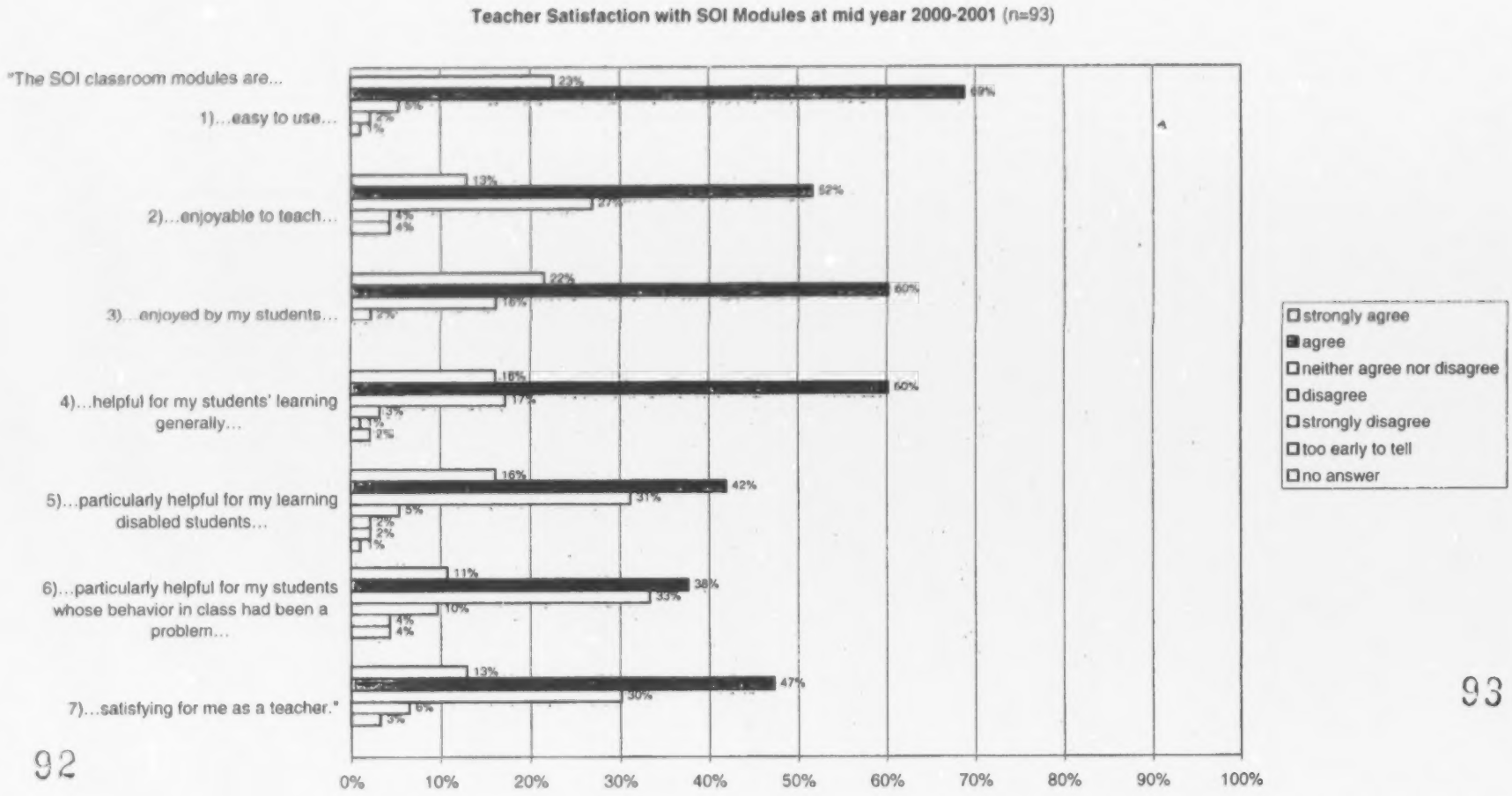

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Figure 4.3: Teacher Satisfaction with SOI Modules at mid-year 2000-2001

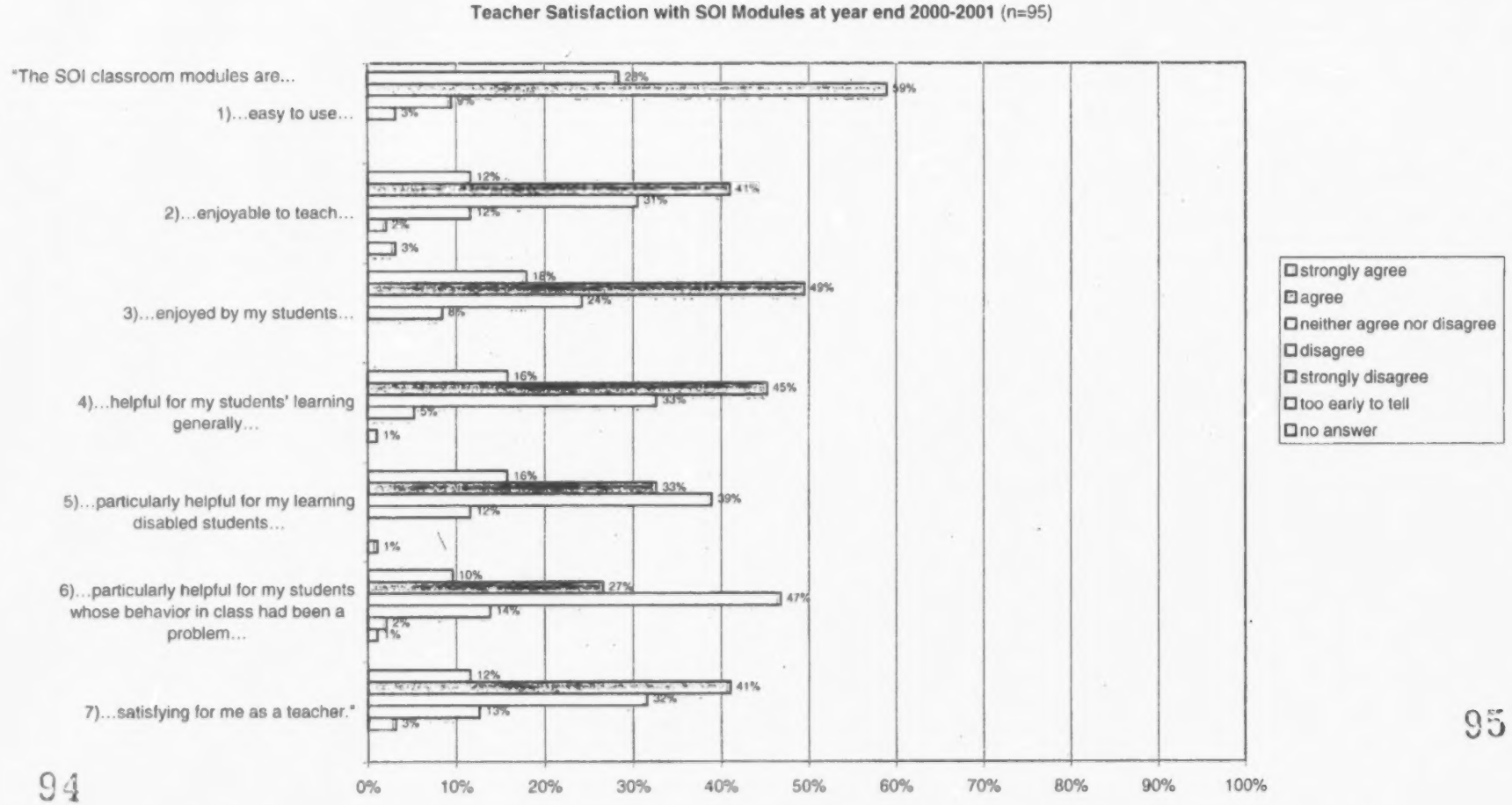

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Figure 4.4: Teacher Satisfaction with SOI Modules at year-end 2000-2001

Table 4.21: Summary of Teacher Satisfaction Survey Responses

Type of Question	Type of Response		
	Negative	Neutral	Positive
Questions related to ease, enjoyment and satisfaction (# 1-3, 7)	10%	24%	65%
Questions related to noted effects on students (#4, 5, 6)	11%	40%	49%

Note. These data are taken from the end of year (May, 2001) distribution of the Teacher Satisfaction Survey, n = 95. Row totals may not sum to 100% because of rounding.

Teacher Interviews

In the Winter of the school year (2000-2001) the evaluation team conducted face-to-face interviews with 16 classroom teachers and 1 resource specialist teacher in 10 of the SOI Program schools. The teachers interviewed were primarily teaching in benchmark grades (3 and 5) and/or had been using the classroom modules portion of the SOI Program and referring students to the SOI Lab for one school year or more. Beyond introductory questions and comments, questions asked were based around benefits for students through use of the classroom modules and attendance in the SOI Lab, with emphasis on improvement toward grade 3 and 5 benchmark standards. Because these teachers' perceptions of the Program related to special education, student behavior, and school attendance have been given in previous parts of the "Evaluation Findings" section they will not be restated here. However, this part also presents these teachers' overarching views on the efficacy of the Program, as well as any recommendations offered for change or improvement. Questions were asked informally, in loose order, and answers were recorded by interviewer note-taking. The complete transcripts of these interviews can be found in Appendix 7.

Most importantly, these 17 teacher interviewees were asked to indicate the contribution the SOI Program makes in preparing their students to meet the Oregon Benchmarks at grades 3 and 5. Responses related to the Program's contribution toward the Benchmarks included mention of general learning skills such as attention, following directions, eye-hand coordination, persistence, and "problem-solving skills." A selection of quotes that illustrate this follow:

- Academically, SOI helps with tracking skills, sequencing, focusing and attention to details.
- Hopefully it helps them with auditory skills and listening. Hopefully it helps visually with progress in reading and writing, and, of course, concentration. Concentration is needed in every curriculum area.
- Benchmark connection? Not really. Anything they do that stretches the brain is good, but [I] don't know what direct connection there is.
- Benchmarks? I have not thought about that...[I] can't answer, probably problem solving, reading directions, looking to see the picture following the text—test taking skills...
- [My] gut feeling—it helps them "zero in" better—when you can't focus and pinpoint things [you're] kind of dead in the water. Don't know if there's proof [of this benefit] there...
- SOI and benchmarks? [That's] hard to answer...eye exercises could help with focusing and paying attention to detail. Should help their reading; stopping to take time and working hard to do good work—

they're willing to do a good job because they enjoy it; also problem solving—most of the state tests have problem solving. Negative aspects: not really seeing how the exercises/modules are relating to academics—part of that is not being trained and not knowing the whole program. Kids really enjoy it.

- Problem solving (math); some of the modules have the same step by step thinking; also in writing—descriptive words…I can tell that kids with 3 years of SOI are better along than those kids without it. Step by step thinking is one of the best parts of the benefits; perseverance is another thing—stay with a task until it's finished. [It] helps with body control and realization of need/ability to control their bodies.
- The 3 who go see [SOI staff person] —their attention and focus really improved. Two students went last year and go this year. One boy's handwriting improved; he can copy homework faster. [Does it] help him reach benchmarks? I don't know. We just took the test before break.
- Relates to writing benchmark; also attention to details—taught not to jump to conclusions—they slow down and with state tests they need to be read carefully and attend to details. A lot of kids fail because of not paying attention to details.
- Problem solving. Looking at things in a different way. Also vocabulary would relate to the writing and shapes and letters all have to do with spelling.
- Benchmarks? [I] see a connection due to critical thinking and maybe also with test taking strategies; gives some strategies for being successful. Kids pretty much enjoy the modules—they do it and they get into it.

As has been the case for teachers in previous years, these teachers also expressed a number of negative aspects of having the SOI Program in their schools. For this group of teachers, the factor most often cited that precluded their use of the SOI modules, or that caused them anxiety about the Program generally, was the lack of time in their school lives along with the press of other curricular demands. The following quotes are illustrative:

- [The Program] takes time from other things we need to do. And scheduling is a problem.
- Is the amount of time spent on the sections valid enough to say it is going to help out? Most of the modules are good. [I] have not given up anything—squeeze things and move a little bit faster; also look for activities that connect to other activities—seek connection/integration with other class work.
- [We're] so pressured, so much to do; lesson plans written for me with Open Court, 2 hours a day; math—all very much prescribed…Don't have enough time, that's the downside.
- Downside? One more added curriculum.
- [Do I use] modules in the classroom? It's hard to find the time, which is why I don't do class instruction on modules. SOI is the thing I really haven't gotten to. Maybe its just me getting used to the schedule. Next year may be different, maybe. More training would make me more comfortable with instructing the modules.
- As a 3rd grade teacher there's pressure from ODE toward testing—being prepared to meet [the standards]. Anything not scored, or directly related to the test . . . I think all 3rd grade teachers probably feel that. It's a frustration—everything should be geared toward benchmarks…
- Downside? Time. Not a whole lot of preparing in a packed curriculum—had to go to answer sheets a lot.
- Negatives? It's always been the time; if I have the time I'll do it a couple of times a week…

Lastly, the teachers were asked about their overall views of the efficacy of the Program, and given the opportunity to offer recommendations for improvement to the Program developers and providers. The following selection of quotes represent their responses:

- Last words? Last year we had someone [from IDS] come to re-explain benefits of SOI—presentation was optional—6 or 8 teachers attended. Really reinforced in me the need to do this every day. Would really like to see the administration put it in as a requirement for inservice. It's not optional now—supposed to do it 2-3 times each week—I think that's good. In defense of other teachers, there's a lot of things we're asked to do—there are always time constraints.

- [The Program] works on self-esteem. If it does nothing else than that then it's a success. The consistency of the program, the organized Lab—it's good for kids. Positive in the way it's set up….I think [SOI Lab Specialist] is the reason it works, too. She's respected in the building. Others say it's a waste of time.

- [The] effects of SOI? Feeling we are greatly blessed to have the Lab. There comes a time with children when one doesn't know what to do—the Lab is a jewel. Modules aren't as popular or well received—another thing to try to fit in. But Lab—everyone [is] appreciative of Lab—so vital. Diagnostics that [SOI Lab Specialist] does is really helpful. Fits in state as an alternative learning environment; an alternative way to work with kids. I wasn't always sold...now I am a believer.

- Recommendation: I think it's [the Program] valid—my only thing is some way to pick out those kids and do that intensive work with them. In the world of reading and learning disabilities—if kid went through this program it would improve them; it's one piece in the world of learning disabilities.

- I hope we don't lose the program—huge difference for me to participate in program and see it myself. [There is] nothing like seeing it for yourself.

- Make modules for those who really need them—use them with children who need the activities and those who don't need it, don't use it. (A big concern from teachers is everybody has to do it). The Lab is successful.

- There's no magic program that's going to fix everything. But this program hits on things not dealt with by other programs: whole person, coordination, vision. And when [we] get back tests there seems to be a sigh of relief from parents, kids, teachers, that there are strengths. Gives hope. Not an instant cure-all, but over the long haul it makes a difference for a number of children.

- [School] views? Mixed. I would say upper grades use it more—everyone is supportive of the Lab. As for classroom use—I think that varies. I probably use it more than some. I think it's a wonderful program but I'm not surprised we're losing it. The state should fund it—a good management program and very good for TAG kids. Has filled some holes that I'll find hard to fill without.

As in previous years of this pilot Program, the responses to the 2 teacher-satisfaction surveys as well as (this year) the 17 face-to-face teacher interviews suggest that most teachers responding support the SOI Program and its continuation in the schools. The majority of teachers who responded to the surveys said the classroom modules were easy to use, that their students enjoyed them, and they cited general improvement in their students' learning. These surveyed views were substantiated and elaborated by the teacher interviews, in which teachers noted improvements in students' underlying learning skills such as focusing, concentration, attention to detail, and persistence as common outcomes that resulted from the Program.

It is also evident however, that there is considerably more equivocation in supporting the classroom portion of the Program than the SOI Learning Center. The SOI Labs and the Specialists and Technicians enjoyed strong support from interviewed teachers who complimented the staffs in the SOI Labs and cited gains in learning skills made by the students from their classrooms who attend the Lab. On the other hand, consistent with prior years, a number of teachers indicated directly, or hinted, that the classroom modules are less valuable to them than the Lab operation and wondered whether or not the Lab could continue to operate at their school without the requirement of classroom modules. Most often, teachers cited time constraints, a very crowded curriculum (particularly at grades 3 and 5), and the modules' less-than-obvious direct correlation with the Oregon content standards as reasons why they felt the Program should continue, but without the universal use of classroom modules.

Conclusions and Discussion

In Year 4, as has been the case in Years 1, 2 and 3, Teaching Research's third party evaluation of the Structure of the Intellect Model Schools Pilot Program examined the effectiveness of the Program with regard to students' academic performance, special education assessment referrals, behavior referrals, language acquisition for students who speak English as a second language, and school attendance. In addition, the evaluation investigated teachers' views with regard to the SOI classroom curriculum and the Program as a whole, as well as Specialists and Technicians operation of the SOI Learning Centers, and their views of the Program.

It was the assumption of the Teaching Research evaluation team that the purpose of any program introduced into a school is to bring about valued positive outcomes for students. Further, it was assumed that, during their attendance at school, students typically mature and make progress in learning (new knowledge and skills acquired and refined). With these assumptions in mind, the evaluation team considered it important to apply a value-added approach to examining the effectiveness of the SOI Program. That is, the evaluation team examined the performance of students in SOI schools *in comparison* to their peers in schools of similar characteristics, but who have not participated in the SOI Program. To that end, 17 comparison schools were carefully selected that match the salient characteristics of the SOI schools.

As is the case for most, if not all programs, the implementation of this pilot Program in Oregon elementary schools can be examined both in terms of intended and unintended outcomes. This section is organized accordingly.

Intended Outcomes

The questions asked in this program evaluation were developed in consultation with the Oregon Department of Education, and with the assent of representatives of Intellectual Development Systems (IDS)—the purveyors of the SOI (BRIDGES) Program. The key questions are as follows:

1. Is there a significant difference in students' academic performance in mathematics and reading/literature between schools experiencing the SOI Program and comparison schools that do not participate in the Program?

2. Is there a significant difference in the levels of Special Education referrals between schools experiencing the SOI Program and comparison schools that do not participate in the Program?

3. Is there a significant difference in the levels of behavior referrals between schools experiencing the SOI Program and comparison schools that do not participate in the Program?

4. Is there a significant difference in language acquisition rates for students with English as a second language between schools experiencing the SOI Program and comparison schools that do not participate in the Program?

5. Is there a significant difference in student attendance rates between schools experiencing the SOI Program and comparison schools that do not participate in the Program?

Overall, to answer the five questions posed above, the Teaching Research evaluation team employed a mixed-method, questions-based approach. The core design, as described in the rationale above, was quasi-experimental, and was supplemented by follow-up case studies, teacher surveys, teacher interviews, focus group interviews, and on-site observations.

Quantitative data collected relevant to the key questions posed included:

1. Oregon Statewide Assessment data in Mathematics (this year including Math problem solving for grade 5) and Reading/Literature (this year including Writing for grades 3 and 5) at grades 3 and 5 for each SOI and comparison school;
2. Number of referrals for Special Education assessments by month and grade for each SOI and comparison school;
3. Number of referrals for inappropriate school behavior by month and grade for each SOI and comparison school;
4. Number of students entering and leaving ESL/LEP programs for each SOI and comparison school; and,
5. Monthly and yearly attendance rates for each SOI and comparison school.

The results of the Oregon assessments were obtained directly from the Department of Education; school administrators and/or office staff at each participating and comparison school provided the remaining data listed above.

In addition to the above sources of data, the evaluation team made a total of 30 school site visits over the course of the 2000-2001 academic year, in addition to the 140 visits conducted in 1998-2000, interviewing SOI Specialists and Technicians at each of the 17 participating schools, and meeting with building administrators. Additional site visits were made to schools attended by the 17 students selected for in-depth, follow-up case studies. Further, 2 focus group sessions were held in Spring 2001 for the SOI Specialists and Technicians. As well, a teacher satisfaction survey was distributed to all teachers in the SOI schools at two points in time (December 2000-January 2001 and May 2001); 93 and 95 teachers responded to the two administrations. Finally, 17 open-ended, face-to-face teacher interviews were conducted in the schools around questions related to the efficacy of the Program in key student outcome areas.

Our findings around each question are summarized below.

1. Is there a significant difference in students' academic performance in mathematics and reading/literature between schools experiencing the SOI Program and comparison schools that do not participate in the Program?

    - The Specialists and Technicians, and the teachers at each of the participating SOI schools provided anecdotal reports on improved student achievement. Organization skills, self-concept, penmanship, and ability to focus were described frequently as evidence of improvement in academic functioning.

    - Statistical analyses comparing SOI and matched comparison schools in reading/literature, writing, math, and math problem solving on the state assessments at grades 3 and 5 revealed statistically significant differences in favor of the SOI schools at grade 3 in reading, and grade 3 in math. In both cases, the size of the difference between the groups was small and represents little practical difference between the average performance of SOI schools and their comparison counterparts. Statistically significant differences were not found for any other comparison, and over the 4 years of this evaluation, no pattern of difference was evident. For example, in Year 3, two comparisons were also found to be statistically significant, both favored comparison schools, and both were small or modest in size. Overwhelmingly, the most common result over the 4 years of this evaluation has been "no statistical difference" between the groups.

    - Several of the SOI schools and the comparison schools showed gains over their previous year's performance on the state assessments in reading/literature and mathematics.

    - In examining the 1998-2000 and 1999-2001 (grade 3 to grade 5) cohorts of students in reading/literature and mathematics, the 17 SOI schools and 17 comparison schools on average showed virtually identical achievement growth.

- **After three and one-half years' implementation for 2 schools and three years' implementation for another 15 schools, the claim of improved academic achievement for schools participating in the SOI Program is not supported.**

2. Is there a significant difference in the levels of special education assessment referrals between schools experiencing the SOI Program and comparison schools that do not participate in the Program?

   - There was no statistically significant difference between SOI and comparison schools on their 2000-2001 referral rates for special education assessment. This result is consistent with that found in all prior years.

   - As in Year 3, there continue to be anecdotal reports from Specialists and Technicians around student improvements in focusing, concentration, and ability to sustain attention.

   - As in Year 3, there continue to be reports of additional students being identified, through their participation in the SOI program, as needing some type of special education intervention.

   - **After three and one-half years' implementation for 2 schools and three years' implementation for another 15 schools, the claim that schools participating in the SOI Program will experience reductions in need for special education services is not supported.**

3. Is there a significant difference in levels of behavior referrals between schools experiencing the SOI Program and comparison schools that do not participate in the Program?

   - There was no statistically significant difference between SOI and comparison schools in terms of referrals for unacceptable behavior for the 2000-2001 academic year. This result is consistent with that found in all prior years.

   - As in Year 3, there continue to be some testimony from the SOI Specialists and Technicians about improved behavior in the SOI Labs and classrooms and anecdotal reports about improved behavior on the playground. Some students were said to be able to concentrate, work better independently, and control their bodies better.

   - Behavior referral trends for the SOI schools reporting these data were inconsistent: some schools showed a decrease in behavior referrals while others reported increases. Mitigating factors at many schools included changes in administration and/or discipline policy, changes in recording methods for behavior referrals, and growth of the school population.

   - **After three and one-half years' implementation for 2 schools and three years' implementation for another 15 schools, the claim that schools participating in the SOI program will experience reductions in referral rates for inappropriate behavior is not supported.**

4. Is there a significant difference in language acquisition rates for students with English as a second language between schools experiencing the SOI Program and comparison schools that do not participate in the Program?

   - The net change in numbers of students participating in ESL programs for both the SOI schools and the comparison schools varies considerably, largely as a function of each school's geographic location.

   - The vast majority of ESL students attending the SOI and comparison schools who leave an ESL program do so due to annual migration patterns of their families or changes in living situations, not because of "graduation" out of ESL eligibility.

- **The question regarding the rate of growth in language acquisition for students who speak English as a second language remains open, although there is no evidence that suggests a greater net reduction in numbers of ESL students for SOI schools as compared to their comparison school peers.**

5. Is there a significant difference in student attendance rates between schools experiencing the SOI Program and comparison schools that do not participate in the Program?

    - As in Year 3, there continue to be reports that students enjoy the SOI modules as well as participating in the SOI Learning Centers.

    - Consistent with previous years, there was no statistically significant difference in attendance rates between the SOI schools and the comparison schools for the 2000-2001 academic year.

    - No discernible trends or patterns in attendance rates for the SOI schools over 1996-2001 were observed.

    - **After three and one-half years' implementation for 2 schools and three years' implementation for another 15 schools, the claim that participation in the SOI Program will lead to improvements in school attendance rates is not supported.**

In summary, data relevant to the SOI Program and the evaluation questions posed were gathered from a wide array of both quantitative and qualitative sources. These data indicate that systemic, measurable effects of the SOI Program on aspects of students' learning, needs for special education assessment services, behavior, or school attendance, remain elusive for the children at the 17 pilot schools that participated in the SOI Program.

Although testimony of improvements in students' learning was provided, and although clearly enjoying the support of the SOI Specialists and Technicians in the participating schools, on a school-wide basis, and viewed against the relevant data from matched comparison schools, the claims made on behalf of the SOI Program are not, at this time, supported by the available information.

Unintended Outcomes

The above discussion focuses on the intended outcomes or the claims made for the Program by its developers and providers. There were, as well, unintended outcomes that resulted from this program over its 3½ years of implementation. For example, over the 3½ years of the SOI Model Schools Program the focus of attention, as expressed by the Lab staff, teachers, and administrators at the schools, quickly shifted from the classroom, and the classroom modules, to the SOI Lab. Many Lab personnel also developed, over the life of the Program, a heightened attention to issues of vision and visual skills, to the point where in several schools the Program came to be viewed by these personnel, and by some teachers, as a means of identifying children whose vision was problematic and, perhaps, having a negative effect on these students' school performance.

SOI Lab. Over the course of the evaluation, the SOI Lab operation in the Program schools took on increasing salience and visibility despite the developers' and provider's intent and promotion of the classroom activities as the vehicle for the expected school-wide outcomes. Module use was monitored during the site visits; classroom teachers were queried about the modules' effects on student learning and behavior and school wide data on learning and behavioral outcomes were collected annually from each school. Nevertheless, it was the SOI Lab that received most of the attention within a school (as evidenced by Lab staff making presentations to school boards, open houses held at the schools, and other information-sharing sessions explaining the Lab operations) and during the IDS site visits as well as the Teaching Research team visits.

It was apparent from reviewing site visit notes, teacher comments, and focus group interview notes that classroom implementation of the module activities was very variable across the schools both in terms of frequency and duration. Many teachers used the modules enthusiastically; an equal number used them reluctantly and/or inconsistently. Reasons for the levels of use of the modules ranged from philosophical

differences with the instructional approaches of the modules, beliefs about the contributions the module activities made to student learning, to concern about the correlation of the modules with the Oregon standards, and to concern that time spent on module instruction took time away from other classroom content. Throughout this inconsistent classroom use, the SOI Labs in each school continued to operate, scheduling and working with approximately 20% of each school's enrollment: students were referred to the Lab by their classroom teachers for what appeared to be rather wide-ranging and idiosyncratic reasons (severe behavior issues to poor handwriting). The SOI Labs occupied a physical space and had considerable visibility within the schools; they were staffed by enthusiastic and helpful people, and the children who went to the Lab very often prospered there and showed some generalization of their successes back to their classrooms.

The SOI Labs were the centers of attention for site review visits by IDS; a typical visit entailed a review of testing or instructional procedures by an IDS representative followed, perhaps, by a conference with the building administrator. The SOI Lab personnel were responsible for materials ordering and distribution; as the persons who had received training on the SOI instructional methods and testing procedures the Lab personnel were also responsible for communicating with the classroom teachers on technical issues related to module implementation, procedures, scheduling, and scoring. In some cases the SOI Lab staff lacked the professional standing with the buildings' teachers and communication was strained. The SOI Lab staff generally set up the schedule for the students who attended the Lab, monitored their progress, and reported that progress to the classroom teachers. As the Program entered its third and fourth years it became apparent that the SOI Lab began to be considered by the staff at the Pilot schools as a separate, and perhaps more important part of the SOI Program. Comments from the Year 3 evaluation report suggest this occurrence and also begin to point to the viewpoint that was developing about the SOI Labs in many schools:

> "Another theme that emerged from the qualitative data is the view [of SOI Lab staff and classroom teachers] of the SOI Learning Centers as a complement or supplement to the special education services offered in schools. In many schools children receiving special education services were also enrolled in the SOI Learning Centers. The prevailing view held by these school personnel seemed to be that the [SOI] Learning Centers were "one more means of helping kids." In some cases there was, and continues to be, some friction between SOI Learning Center activities and special education offerings, but in other cases the SOI staff is invited to participate in students' IEP development sessions and is consulted more generally about instructional issues with these students. At times this focus on the SOI Learning Centers as a parallel special education offering obscured the stated intent of the SOI Program as a *school-wide* intervention intended to help *all* children with their school performance." p. 113.

As the preceding quote suggests, in the pilot schools the SOI Lab came to be seen by personnel in the schools as a place where children receive assistance, and/or attention. Over the course of the evaluation the Teaching Research team frequently heard support from the classroom teachers and building administrators for the Lab, often couched in phrases like, "if it helps the kids, then I'm in favor of it."

The status of the SOI Lab within a school building, and increasingly as *the* primary component of the Program, began to be reflected in comments about the nature of the third-party evaluation. Critical comments from SOI Lab staffers and some classroom teachers expressed concern about the focus of the evaluation and alluded to the view that the evaluation was "looking at the wrong things" when it focused on school-wide outcomes and gave scant attention to the children who attended the Lab. As a specific example, during one site visit at the beginning of the 2000-2001 academic year the Teaching Research team met with the building principal, the school district curriculum coordinator, the school's special education teacher, and the SOI technician. The school personnel were critical of the contents of the Year 3 evaluation report, primarily due, in their view, to the failure to include in the report the gains achieved by the students from this school who attended the SOI Lab. The discussion was lengthy and was resolved when the Teaching Research team reiterated that the focus of the evaluation effort, as commissioned by the Oregon Department of Education, was on the school-wide outcomes claimed by the developers and the Program provider. In the course of the two years prior to this most recent academic year, the view of the Program, in this school, had changed from a school wide program to one that viewed the SOI Lab as the primary component and the children attending the Lab as the subjects of interest in the evaluation. The classroom modules were not mentioned nor were school-wide effects taken into account.

The following comments from SOI staffers and classroom teachers in the Pilot Program schools, obtained during the site visits, focus group interviews, and teacher interviews further illustrate this view:

- " [As for] recommendations for IDS: Three years ago I thought my work—the Lab—was what was being evaluated. Then I realized it was what classroom teachers and kids were doing with [the] workbooks. Had I known, I would have pushed it. [I] think the claims are unrealistic to follow through. [They] need to look at the claims. [We] *should* look at a certain child profile—but on a school-wide basis? The Lab kids are succeeding where they may never have succeeded. Like with special ed, [the] claims need to be made on an individual basis."

- "[I'm] feeling we are greatly blessed to have the Lab. There comes a time with children when one doesn't know what to do—the Lab is a jewel. [The] modules aren't as popular or well received—another thing to try to fit in. But the Lab—everyone's appreciative of Lab—it's so vital. [The] diagnostics that [SOI staffers] do are really helpful. [It] fits in the state as "an alternative learning environment", an alternative way to work with kids. I wasn't always sold (in 1st or 2nd grade), but now [I'm] a believer."

- "Lab benefits? I have yet to see somebody *not* benefit. With some kids I would say somebody put them on Ritalin—[their] ability to focus and ability to take ownership—[the] help with attention and time on task and overall attitude—definitely influenced by [SOI staffer]. Anything else? If we had to choose a program or not, [I] would sure hope to save some of it—[I] know it needs to prove itself. If we were able to choose, please keep that Lab, even if the Special Ed department was working at its best, still keep the Lab. Because if not now, we'll pay later."

Vision. A second unintended outcome emerged within the SOI Lab operations at many of the schools. SOI Lab staff in these schools conducted assessments of the children referred to the Lab and began to identify a population of children who performed poorly on some of the visual activities, often including activities requiring control of eye movements, and began suggesting these children be evaluated by an eye care specialist. In numerous cases the SOI Lab personnel reported that these children were subsequently identified as having some type of vision weakness, again often related to control of eye movements, and provided with remedial interventions. Sometimes the SOI Lab activities were a part of these interventions and other times these interventions were done under the direction of the eye care specialist. During the focus group interviews and the site visits the SOI Lab staff described their observations of the effects that these vision deficits, heretofore unidentified, had on the students' academic and behavioral performance in the classroom. They also described how the visual aspects fit into the overall Lab and classroom environment and how several of the SOI Lab staffers have begun participating in vision screenings for students:

- Look how many kids would have been referred for Special Education without the help with vision, and how many have not. It was a vision problem.

- "[The] vision stuff I've learned—I can really pick up kids who are having problems. Kids have had problems with vision—tracking and vision. I conduct screenings for vision with a team of 18 volunteers."

- "Vision issues [at school] are now in the strategic planning process for the district, [I'm] not sure where it will go, [but I] totally believe in it (vision); [we're] missing a lot of kids."

- "[The] vision screening has been 100% accurate—if we see it and refer them on—they see it."

- "The vision piece is very necessary and important. [We're] seeing the importance of comprehensive screening. We are asked to screen sensory integration/ sensory motor. SOI is often a first stop and then to other programs."

- "We have lots of behavior problems in lab. Now [we're] beginning to look at kids in a different way. One kid, a behavior problem—in your face. I said, 'give him to me.' When I vision screened him we learned this very bright kid wasn't seeing much of anything. Now our teachers are doing better watching body and space relationships, and vision. [I] had a teacher come in and say, 'I don't know what we're going to do

without you next year.' She's become so much aware of issues, such as mid-line, now she watches kids who have difficulties. [I] think SOI has made teachers better observers. We have lots of new teachers this year. This one is a firm believer in SOI. He refers parents to me. He's the one who convinced me to start vision screening older kids."

- "SOI is very important, just as important as the school nurse. [It] catches vision problems not caught elsewhere. I've talked to the nurse about their screening. They're set up to do mass screening, and results are so delayed. Not individual in depth screening. Also, really important in school, here most kids can't afford eye exams. We're providing another resource—this is why they're willing to keep us on next year."

- "Even if SOI goes away, [I] can still screen and find vision problems, but the treatment goes away. SOI lead me to the New York vision screening (kit was $600), then to developmental optometrists, then to activities that would help. SOI has taught us this, functional vision screening is needed-- near point vision is important."

Over time, then, in many schools as the teachers' and administrators' views of the Lab vis-à-vis the classroom modules evolved, the SOI Labs came to be seen as the defining feature of the Program. In addition, given the structure of the Lab operation, the Labs became associated with remedial efforts for children and were seen as a *complement* to the school's special education program, or as almost a parallel program. Here was another resource for children who were struggling; the procedures resembled special education procedures in that teachers (or in some cases parents) identified a student struggling in some area of achievement or behavior and referred that child for an assessment to see if he/she might be eligible for some type of additional assistance or intervention. In one SOI school for example, the special education director indicated that children referred for special education eligibility assessments should first attend the SOI Lab "as an intermediate step". The vision component added to the visibility of the Lab; here again was one more way that certain children could be helped.

In both instances these added, and largely unintended outcomes, may have contributed to the *diffusion* of the Program's original intent within the schools to the extent that the original, stated claims for outcomes derived from the Program became secondary and, at some schools, lost completely. Certainly children participating in the SOI Program activities, both in the classroom and in the Lab, derived some benefit from their experience. They had the opportunity to do activities that were interesting, challenging, and seemingly unrelated to the academic content of the school. The teachers and SOI Lab staff with whom we spoke continually referred to students' increased abilities to 'focus' which appears to mean their ability to bring their mental resources to bear on given academic tasks and sustain the use of those resources. Children typically, but not always, progress through a year of schooling and exit the year somewhat further along in their skills, abilities, and maturity than when they entered the year. The SOI Lab personnel, classroom teachers, and building administrators with whom we spoke were confident that the SOI Program contributed to the children's growth over the course of the Program's implementation. With the focus of the program diffused among the classroom modules, the Lab's evolution in importance vis-à-vis the classroom modules, and the inclusion of vision screenings as part of the Lab's functions in several schools one can ask, "which students were to be helped by the SOI Program? Who were the intended targets for the Program's activities?" Should instructional efforts and attention be directed toward the children in the classrooms who are working on the modules, or should the instructional efforts and analysis of outcomes center on the 20 percent of the students from each school who attended the Lab regularly? How should the outcomes, both academic and behavioral, for children identified as requiring some type of visual intervention and receiving those interventions outside of the school be interpreted? In each of the above cases there were, no doubt, positive outcomes. But the seeming diffusion of the targets for the Program has perhaps interfered with the Program's original, stated claims and contributed in some degree to the lack of support for those original claims.

Summary

Despite the failure of the SOI Program to achieve its claimed benefits for students and schools generally, as described above in "Intended Outcomes," the implementation and efficacy of the SOI Program depends to some degree on the perspective represented.

SOI Specialists and Technicians are highly committed and remain enthusiastic about the Program. Uniformly, they communicate a strong belief that the SOI Lab activities are having beneficial effects for the children who attend, and they provide anecdotes capturing that belief. Thus, all felt that the Program does show positive effects, but only for children attending the SOI Learning Center. In this regard, SOI Specialists and Technicians recommend that SOI and IDS revise the school-wide improvement claims they make for the Program. In addition, the SOI Lab staff and the Learning Center activities seemingly enjoy strong support from the classroom teachers and building administrators.

Children attending the SOI Learning center are routinely described as more focused, well behaved, enthusiastic, and able to work independently. The SOI Specialists and Technicians described students who enjoy many of the activities and eagerly come to the Learning Centers at scheduled times. As well, information gathered from 17 case study students who were followed-up during this academic year is also suggestive of some impact from the SOI Program. In all case studies, students reportedly improved in self-concept, behavior, and/or academic skills. These reports of improvement were mitigated by the question of what else may have contributed to these students' improvements over and above the normal effects of maturation as they were also receiving other interventions (medical, educational, and/or counseling).

On the part of classroom teachers, the SOI classroom curriculum is viewed more positively than in earlier years, because of their repackaging in grade-specific workbooks, and because many teachers have simply grown accustomed to using the modules, but still with some equivocation. Yet, a majority of classroom teachers responding to the teacher satisfaction survey report that the modules are "enjoyed by students," "enjoyable to teach," and "helpful for students' learning generally." Some teachers cited anecdotes of improved student behavior, or handwriting, or organization, but many also stated they were not able to separate the effects of the modules from other factors that influence students' learning during the course of the year (e.g., maturation, other programs, changes in parenting and/or living situation, corrective lenses, beginning (or ceasing) medication, additional attention, etc.). Criticism of the classroom modules centered on on the amount of class time the modules take to complete and, consequently, the loss of instructional time available for teaching Oregon standards.

This Year 4 report presents the information gathered during a four-year evaluation of the SOI Program as it was implemented in 17 elementary schools in Oregon over the course of the 1997-2001 academic years. Two of the schools began the Program in February of the 1997-98 school year and the remaining 15 began implementation at the start of the 1998-1999 school year. The information collected and presented in this report thus describes the efforts of 17 schools to implement an "innovation" (the SOI Program) into an existing organization. The SOI staffs, administrators and teachers in each of the 17 schools have largely accomplished this, although with considerable variation. Throughout, SOI staffs in the schools remained largely enthusiastic about and committed to the Program, and willing to provide testimony on the benefits of the Program. School administrators and teachers were generally supportive of the SOI school staffs in this regard. However, despite considerable effort, ongoing good will, as well as some specific anecdotes, the benefits claimed for the SOI Program, and hoped for by school staffs have not been detected with any degree of scale that could be considered program success.

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SOI Pilot Program Schools, 2000-2001

Site Information

School	Area	Type	Town/District & Co.	Student Population	Principal	Specialists/Technicians
Adrian Elementary 202 High St Adrian OR 97901-0108	far-eastern	K-8 (SOI K-5)	Town of Adrian Adrian SD 61 PO Box 108 Adrian OR 97901-0108 Malheur Co.	122	Bill Ellsworth	Elma Witty Lisa Strauch
Allen Dale Elementary 2320 Williams Hwy Grants Pass OR 97527	lower I-5	K-5	Town of Grants Pass Grants Pass SD7 725 NE Dean Drive Grants Pass OR 97526-1649 Josephine Co.	414	Elizabeth Swinea	Joan Law Vicki Davis Melanie Gerard
Bear Creek Elementary 51 SE 13th St Bend OR 97702-1498	central	K-5	Town of Bend Bend-La Pine Admin SD 1 520 NW Wall St Bend OR 97701-2699 Deschutes Co.	566	Kathleen Saterdahl	Julie Bibler
Evergreen Elementary 437 S 9th St Redmond OR 97756-9009	central	K-5	Redmond Redmond SD 2J 145 SE Salmon Ave Redmond OR 97756-8422 Deschutes	482	Susanne Harrison	Mary Kimmel
Fairview Elementary 225 Main St Fairview OR 97024-1704	upper I-5	K-5	Town of Fairview Reynolds SD7 1204 NE 201st Ave Fairview OR 97204-2499 Multnomah Co.	475	Dennis Sizemore	Theresa Stepan
Fossil Grade School 404 Main St PO Box 287 Fossil OR 97830	central	K-8 (SOI K-6)	Town of Fossil Fossil SD 21J PO Box 206 Fossil OR 97830-0206 Wheeler Co.	58	Jack Lorts	Celia Lorts
Goshen Elementary 34020 B St Eugene OR 97405 9622	middle I-5	K-7	Town of Eugene Springfield SD 19 525 Mill St Springfield OR 97477-4598 Lane Co.	130	Bill Davis	Kathy Bronson
Gray Elementary 785 Alameda Ave Astoria OR 97103-5998	northern coast	K-5	Town of Astoria Astoria SD 1 3196 Marine Dr Astoria OR 97103 2798 Clatsop Co.	267	Carole Quick	Karen Grimm

School	Area	Type	Town/District & Co.	Student Population	Principal	Specialists/Technicians
McGovern Elementary 600 NW Elwood Winston OR 97496	lower I-5	K-5	Town of Winston Winston-Dillard SD 116 165 Dyke Rd Winston OR 97496-8501 Douglas Co.	483	David Hanson	Debbie Bishop
Milner Crest Elementary 1255 Hemlock PO Box 509 Coos Bay OR 97420-0102	southern coast	K-5	Town of Coos Bay Coos Bay SD 9 PO Box 509 Coos Bay OR 97420-0102 Coos Co.	247	Tom Leahy	Cindy Bodkin Donna Lee
Rhododendron Elementary 2151 Oak St Florence OR 97439-9409	southern coast	3-5	Town of Florence Siuslaw SD 97J 2111 Oak St Florence OR 97439-9618 Lane Co.	406	Susan Waddell (Sally Prouty)	Lisa Davis
Riddle Elementary 5th & Park Sts Riddle OR 97469	lower I-5	K-6	Town of Riddle Riddle SD 70 PO Box 45 Riddle OR 97469-0045 Douglas Co.	272	Judy Gardner	Jacque Collins Debbie Barnes
Stella Mayfield Elementary PO Box 638 Elgin OR 97827-0068	far-eastern	K-8	Town of Elgin Elgin SD 23 PO Box 68 Elgin OR 97827-0068	294	Larry Christman	Cathy Thompson
Sweetbriar Elementary 501 SE Sweetbriar Lane Troutdale OR 97060-2544	upper I-5	K-5	Town of Troutdale Reynolds SD 7	520	Patricia Baker	Debbie Jensen
Thurston Elementary 7345 Thurston Rd Springfield OR 97478-6414	middle I-5	K-5	Town of Springfield Springfield SD 19 525 Mill St Springfield OR 97477-4598 Lane Co.	397	Kathi Dew	Linda Ahern Barbara Sidwell
Warrenton Grade School 820 SW Cedar St Warrenton OR 97146 9799	northern coast	K-8	Town of Warrenton Warrenton-Hammond SD30 820 SW Cedar St Warrenton OR 97146 9799 Clatsop Co.	585	Janice Schock	Barbara Holland Lori Hackwith
Whitworth Elementary 1151 SE Miller Ave Dallas OR 97338-2798	upper I-5	K-5	Town of Dallas Dallas SD2 111 SW Ash St Dallas OR 97338 Polk Co.	424	Lynn Hurt	Wendy Kaufman Donna Weld

2000-2001 SOI and Comparison Schools

Grade 3 & 5 State Socioeconomic Rank (1999-00) and School Size (2001)

SOI Schools	SES (3/5, 1999)		School Size	Type	Comparison	SES (3/5, 1999)		School Size	Type
Adrian*	149	172	122	K-5	**C1**	157	170	44	K-6
Allen Dale	334	352	414	K-5	**C 2**	287	269	355	K-5
Bear Creek	406	408	566	K-5	**C 3**	277	276	524	K-5
Evergreen	387	356	482	K-5	**C 4**	307	272	408	K-5
Fairview	297	283	475	K-5	**C 5**	209	216	444	K-6
Fossil	nr	nr	58	K-8	**C 6**	155	121	106	K-8
Goshen	341	314	130	K-7	**C 7**	472	455	134	K-5
Gray*	333	294	267	K-5	**C 8**	322	338	393	K-5
McGovern	123	126	483	K-5	**C-9**	219	212	355	K-5
Milner Crest	422	436	247	K-5	**C10**	475	488	378	K-5
Rhododendron	250	234	406	3-5	**C11**	372	393	410	K-5
Riddle	151	146	272	K-6	**C12**	303	331	373	K-6
Stella Mayfield	514	536	294	K-8	**C13**	553	538	113	K-8
Sweetbriar	668	662	520	K-5	**C14**	666	678	528	K-5
Thurston	611	595	397	K-5	**C15**	586	573	385	K-5
Warrenton	414	394	585	K-8	**C16**	221	207	498	K-8
Whitworth	410	384	424	K-5	**C17**	230	217	358	K-6

Notes: *These schools were participating in the SOI program for a 4th year; nr = not reported

Year 4 Evaluation Team Site Visits

Visiting Team: **Andrew McConney**
Robert Ayres
Laurel Cuthbertson

School	Principal	SOI Specialists /Technicians	visit dates
Adrian Elementary 202 High St Adrian OR 97901-0108	Bill Ellsworth	Elma Witty Lisa Strauch	1. Oct. 12 2. Feb. 22
Allen Dale Elementary 2320 Williams Hwy Grants Pass OR 97527	Elizabeth Swinea	Joan Law Vicki Davis Melanie Gerard	1. Oct. 3 2. Feb. 27
Bear Creek Elementary 51 SE 13th St Bend OR 97702-1498	Kathleen Saterdahl	Julie Bibler	1. Feb. 2
Evergreen Elementary 437 S 9th St Redmond OR 97756-9009	Susanne Harrison	Mary Kimmel	1. Nov. 21 (phone) 2. Feb. 2
Fairview Elementary 225 Main St Fairview OR 97024-1704	Dennis Sizemore	Theresa Stepan	1. Oct. 24 2. Feb. 20
Fossil Elementary 404 Main St PO Box 287 Fossil OR 97830	Jack Lorts	Celia Lorts	 2. Feb. 6
Goshen Elementary 34020 B St Eugene OR 97405 9622	Bill Davis	Kathy Bronson	1. Oct. 20 2. Feb. 13
Gray Elementary 785 Alameda Ave Astoria OR 97103-5998	Carole Quick	Karen Grimm	1.Oct. 17 2. Feb. 9
McGovern Elementary 600 NW Elwood Winston OR 97496	David Hanson	Debbie Bishop	1. Oct. 3 2. Feb. 27
Milner Crest Elementary 1255 Hemlock PO Box 509 Coos Bay OR 97420-0102	Tom Leahy	Cindy Bodkin Donna Lee	1. Oct. 6 2. Feb. 16
Rhododendron Elementary 2151 Oak St Florence OR 97439-9409	Susan Waddell (Sally Prouty)	Lisa Davis	1. Oct. 6
Riddle Elementary 5th & Park Sts Riddle OR 97469	Judy Gardner	Jacque Collins Debbie Barnes	1. Oct. 3 2. Feb. 27
Stella Mayfield Elementary PO Box 638 Elgin OR 97827-0068	Larry Christman	Cathy Thompson	1. Oct. 13 2. Feb. 23

School	Principal	SOI Specialists /Technicians	visit dates
Sweetbriar Elementary 501 SE Sweetbriar Lane Troutdale OR 97060-2544	Patricia Baker	Debbie Jensen	1. Oct. 24 2. Feb. 20
Thurston Elementary 7345 Thurston Rd Springfield OR 97478-6414	Kathi Dew	Linda Ahern Barbara Sidwell	1. Oct. 20 2. Feb. 13
Warrenton Grade School 820 SW Cedar St Warrenton OR 97146 9799	Janice Schock	Barbara Holland Lori Hackwith	1. Oct. 17 2. Feb. 9
Whitworth Elementary 1151 SE Miller Ave Dallas OR 97338-2798	Lynn Hurt	Wendy Kaufman Donna Weld	1. Oct. 24 2. Feb. 20

2000-2001 Case Studies School Visits

Visitor: Deanna Todd-Goodson

Date	**School**
April 19, 2001	Goshen Elementary School Thurston Elementary School Thurston Middle School
April 26, 2001	McGovern Elementary Pioneer Youth Corps
April 27, 2001	Sweetbriar Elementary School
May 10, 2001	Milner Crest Elementary Sunset Middle School
May 11, 2001	Rhododendron Elementary Siuslaw Middle School Waldport Elementary School
May 17, 2001	Adrian Elementary School Vale Middle School Vale Elementary School
May 24, 2001	Bear Creek Elementary School Evergreen Elementary School
May 31, 2001	Astoria Middle School Gray Elementary School Lewis & Clark Elementary School
June 14, 2001	Whitworth Elementary School (phone visit)

SOI THIRD PARTY EVALUATION
YEAR 4 FOCUS GROUP PROTOCOL
FOR SOI SPECIALISTS AND TECHNICIANS

(Warm Springs, Friday, April 27, 2001)

First, we're going to start with some general questions, based on your experiences, interactions, and observations over the course of the SOI Program in your school:

1. Is your school different from what it was 3 or 4 years ago? If so, how? And, how does the SOI Program fit or not fit into that change?

2. In your view, in what ways does the SOI Program contribute to the overall well-being of a school?

3. Please describe the school setting or context in which the Bridges/SOI Program would be most effective.

4. Over the course of the SOI Program in your school, what went well?

5. When you think about the SOI Program in your school, were there any surprises for you as it unfolded over time? That is, did the Program have, in your view, any unanticipated outcomes or consequences?

6. Our evaluation has consistently shown that the SOI Program, across 16 to 19 schools in Oregon, has not met expectations for student achievement, behavior, etc. that were claimed for it by the developers. Why do you think that's been the case?

Now let's focus for a bit on the SOI Lab. Based on your experiences and the reactions of the children who came to the Lab, could you respond to the following questions:

7. Please describe the kind of student who is likely to benefit most from the SOI Lab.

8. What works with the Lab activities? That is, if a child improves in a given area why does he/she improve?

9. Are there children who have not shown improvement in the Lab? If yes, is there a common element on the part of those children that you can identify?

10. Over the course of the last 3-plus years, it has been apparent that children have taken longer to complete their Programs than was originally intended. In your view, why has this been the case?

Let's talk a bit about the SOI <u>classroom modules</u>. Think back over your observations of and interactions with the teachers and children in your school. Based on the impressions you've formed, please answer the following questions about the modules:

11. Over the 2, 3, or 4 years that SOI was in place in your school, how did teachers view the modules—what did you hear from them? Did their views change over time, and if so how?

12. In your view, what can one reasonably expect by way of student outcomes if the modules are implemented according to IDS' instructions?

Finally, we want to ask for your advice.

13. If a school person (a principal or teacher-leader) called you and said that the Bridges Program was going to start in that school in September, and asked you for advice on start-up and implementation, what would you say?

14. If IDS called you and asked for advice in redesigning its school Program, what would you say?

15. If the Oregon Legislature's Committee on Education called you and asked for advice on continuing, changing, or discontinuing the Program, what would you say?

If time permits:

16. If asked today, how do you describe the SOI Program to folks wanting to learn about it? What does the Program do? How does it work?

17. What are IDS/Bridges' strengths as a program provider?

18. What are IDS/Bridges' weaknesses as a program provider?

19. Looking back over the 2, 3, or 4 years of SOI in your school, what has been your biggest success in the Lab?

20. Similarly, what has been your biggest challenge or frustration in the Lab?

21. Please talk about your general view of the Lab and Lab activities today, and if you can, talk about any changes in your view since you became involved in the Progam.

22. What are the necessary ingredients for the modules to be most effective?

23. In your school, in your view, how thoroughly (completely; faithfully; consistently) were the modules implemented?

24. In your view, what effect(s) did the modules actually have on the children in the classrooms, especially those children who did not participate in the SOI Lab? How do you know?

25. From you perspective as the lead SOI Program persons in the schools, what are the modules' greatest strengths? Greatest liabilities?

SOI THIRD PARTY EVALUATION
YEAR 4 FOCUS GROUP TRANSCRIPTS
WITH SOI SPECIALISTS AND TECHNICIANS

(Warm Springs, Friday, April 27, 2001)

1. Is your school different from what it was 3 or 4 years ago? If so, how? And, how does the SOI Program fit or not fit into that change?

- It's different in the fact that we can diagnose vision problems that went undetected before. We're working with kids that people once thought would never make it. Now we know there are things we can do with those kids. Not much of a dent in academics, though. Although most kids are now taking state tests at grade level, when before they were not.
- See a lot more kids in glasses than we used to.
- And we're 100% right on. Hasn't been one case that we referred who didn't need some vision help.
- Different principal—atmosphere changes as that changes. Think we lost some of that buy-in when we lost the previous administrator. SOI lost steam. Teachers still ask me questions regarding SOI, not the gal in the lab. Staff feels the difference between the teacher and the assistant.
- The same: SOI lost steam. SOI doesn't 'affect' state test scores. But we're still getting referrals from teachers. No Title I pullout—have to be Special Education to get help.
- Growth for child. Child starts out so low, not reading.
- We have some kids that are in their 3rd year. Now, though, they're performing at grade level. It takes 3 years for children to learn to read sometimes.
- Miracle children that aren't performing at all—we see them and they break through that vision barrier. I think the primary teachers have more buy-in. Even though kids can do physical exercises, need to push to tune up.
- Even though they gain a number of abilities, still have a major gap between academics—they still need that help.
- I do modules in class. They are a tremendous asset to the classroom. I think they can learn so much from them. Some kids have been doing them for 3 years, and they're like, 'Oh! I know this.'
- So important that we have 100% buy-in for that reason.
- We may see our test scores drop without the lab and modules. Teachers come and say kids are stronger doing basic foundation skills that people assume they would already know.
- This year's 5th graders—60% more passing the benchmarks than last year. A few years from now, see if scores will drop—but I hate that, comparing apples to oranges.
- I want to look at intact group—waiting to see those scores. When I see the 5th grade scores vs. the 3rd grade scores.
- We were considerably higher than other 2 elementary schools in our district. Of course, time will tell.
- Stability. See Program for a few years in a row. Things feel more under control. Wondering how to connect test with SOI? —Teachers have another resource; kids have a resource, helps others...all feeling to be calmer.
- Ours has been through a lot of changes, reading, etc. New principals each year, new program—changes one on top of another--hard/impossible to know what is making differences...SOI?
- That's true for us, too. New principal. Principal who wrote the grant is no longer there. Our school more connected, more integrated Sp Ed. SOI is all a part of it. People in different programs working together better. SOI fits in as 1 component of the entire program in for kids.
- A lot of staff is taking it more seriously.

- Staff much more supportive; involves me more. This SOI is an important, big piece. It fits into the overall.
- Staff involves me much more. Been invited into Special Education team meetings. New kids on IEPs--SOI is a part.
- Staff/Teachers/Administration/Special Education are becoming more dependent on SOI. Parents are dependent.
- SOI was in a portable outside. Now I'm in the main school, and much more involved. Parents are stopping in and wanting information, wanting their child involved. Teachers are understanding, and now referring the "right" kind of child.
- They're putting the horse before the cart, now.
- The vision piece--is very necessary and important. Seeing the importance of comprehensive screening. We are asked to screen--sensory integration/ sensory motor. SOI is often 1st stop and then to other programs.
- New principal. Original grant writer—principal is current coordinator. Discipline procedure is stronger. Changed to a new reading series; new series every year.
- We've had a new math series, also new reading and writing series. A big influence on what teachers do. People don't expect us to be around next year. Have been seeing all kindergarteners-kindergarten teachers see it as a necessity—we do whole groups of kindergarteners. It's really moving quickly; very positive aspect. This motivates other kids. This year is more difficult because of the funding. Big changes—our PE teacher left. Before, kids showed up. This year, kids aren't showing up as often. The new PE teacher is great; it's a scheduling challenge. Was using PE as [lab] time – kids want to go to PE rather then SOI.

2. In your view, in what ways does the SOI Program contribute to the overall well-being of a school?

- Positive resource the teachers can use. Small district having its 1 resource that people can fall back on without IEPs and Special Education. Been real positive—they're clamoring to come in; positive for the teachers and the kids. Even in a district without extra resources to have somebody to be involved in.
- We also have a smaller district. The SOI Program has contributed to stability and because we're small, we can do things big districts can't. Allows us to know children better. Makes for a healthier SD, and is the key to knowing the child—if we didn't have that, we wouldn't have these successes. Going to miss it.
- Very being of a school depends on kids' self-esteem. If they can feel can-do attitude, we ease, coach, and then they feel they can do it—transfer self-esteem. If kids can feel good about themselves it boosts the school atmosphere. Don't think teachers have the time to do that one on one like they get in the lab.
- Think the numbers of kids in lab—the behavior kids are not in SOI lab. It's a moot point asking about SOI effect on behavior. Don't have behavior problems that go to SOI lab.
- Behavior problems in lab may be non-suspendable that are behavior issues we gather statistics on.
- We have lots of behavior problems in lab. Now beginning to look at kids in a different way. One kid, a behavior problem—in your face. I said, "give him to me." When I vision screened him we learned this very bright kid wasn't seeing much of anything. Now our teachers are doing better watching body and space relationships, and vision. Had a teacher come in and said, 'don't know what we're going to do without you next year.' She's become so much aware of issues, e.g., midline, now she watches kids who have difficulties. Think SOI has made teachers better observers. We have lots of new teachers this year. This one is a firm believer in SOI. He refers parents to me. He's the one who convinced me to start vision screening older kids. Contributed to parents' education, too. More parents come in; they say, 'so and so said you did this with their child, can you do it with mine?' I think we have a support group, and when it's gone there'll be enough talk about developmental vision.
- People who come in from ESD--specialists, occupational therapists are moaning we're not going to be there.
- I first heard about SOI-I have one child with cerebral palsy—therapy and physical activities are tremendous help. Lots of improvement on that. On mental—it really helps. My youngest had a hard time following—distracted—4 corners—those exercises were difficult. The attitude not to give up . . . I've found that in lab might be the only time they hear that.
- Two words kids aren't allowed to say are "I can't." Practice. Funny to hear kids say to each other, "Yes, you can." Builds in support group. Nobody's an odd person out.

- Hard to answer. So many things now working together to meet the needs of kids. There are a lot of programs—like Title I. Everyone is trying to take credit, but it is a group effort.
- Vision and focus--we're the only program that targets focus / small motor skills.
- SOI has contributed as one more integral piece. SOI is a place where kids get some things that they don't get anywhere else—fills a void.
- Teachers that work with children know that there's more…
- …Able to serve more completely.
- Teachers understand better about vision and tracking. They know that there's a place for this.
- SOI is very important, just as important as school nurse. Catches vision problems not caught elsewhere.
- I've talked to school nurse about their screening. They're set up to do mass screening, and results are so delayed. Not individual in depth screening. Also, really important in school, here most kids can't afford eye exams. We're providing another resource—this is why they're willing to keep us on next year.
- Through K135 screening in our school, kids not found for many reasons. Finding kids who fell through the cracks. Now schools don't wait for nurse or general screening, come straight to us. Fast turn around. Results are handed to Family Advocate Network. Kids can be seen right away to get diagnosis or for glasses. Money opening up for glasses and exams--making a big difference.
- I think SOI led us there--to developmental optometrist and NY vision screening...[I] have trained the school nurse. I do all the testing for 1st graders in the Fall, 4th graders in the Spring.
- Look how many kids would have been referred for Special Education without the help with vision, and how many have not. It was a vision problem.
- "I want you to know how fortunate you are to have people support you. I have only 4 teachers in entire district that support me." Over all we have 15 teachers.
- We did a staff survey last month. Only 2 were on the fence.

3. Please describe the school setting or context in which the Bridges/SOI Program would be most effective.

- Our wish list?
- At Whitworth we serve mostly kindergarteners. It's tremendous…15 to 18 students, 4 or 5 adults with them rotating. Teachers are amazed. Any setting where teachers can watch and observe growth. Or to see one eye flip off to the right—it's disturbing to them, but they say they cannot imagine not having this—the numbers of success. I could carry that on—whole class—1st and 2nd grade. Then by 3rd grade, we'd know who to test. Would finish in 2 years. Then I don't know I'd even deal with 5th graders.
- We have teachers come watch. We've toyed with identifying kids, suggested to teachers to pull certain kids, and they say, "No! Do the whole group!"
- The 1st year we tried to pull out kindergarteners, and it didn't work. The 2nd year we didn't serve kindergarteners. This year, do whole class of kindergarteners. I take SOI on the road to the classroom. They are doing so great. Pleased with their progress, and so are their teachers, one in particular. It has really helped with coordination and handwriting.
- We worked with whole group kindergarten at the beginning of the year. 12 to 13 kids with 2 people—a group exercise.
- I'd like for it not to be so based on academics. Rather understand the developmental part. Trying to convince parents, too. Think teachers loose sight of development, trying to get better grades/test scores. Some teachers' buy-in was forced on them.
- I would like more expertise come in and educate principals and teachers, rather than leaving it to us non-experts.
- One thing we've done is bring parents in on parent night. Most effective. I would also scale to K, 1st and 2nd, and probably 3rd. By 5th grade they're loosing interest.
- Harder for them at that point to unlearn whatever behavior they have.
- I would love people to come and try these things. I also think those that don't go to SOI lab and try—it's not easy to do. To see what is going on. Ideally to be set as same priority as learning to read or do math. But even after 3 years we're still trying to prove how important it is. Maybe if every child had a beanbag.

- My sister likes to sew so I have 30 beanbags.
- What get reported in paper is reading and math but this isn't.
- We haven't had buy-in with 4th and 5th grade teachers as much as K and 2nd grade teachers. One of the 1st grade teachers has said I wish my whole class could do this. First when we tried K we thought, 'oh, lost cause.' But now, the progress! Ideally, whole class k, 1, and 2. And 3-4s in lab setting. And teachers need to do BM with them...we have 25 minutes—can't get as much done with them. I have 1 older student who didn't want to be pulled out—low self-esteem. I arranged to do it after school. Now he's the "middle" kid in class. Builds attitude. Kids have to get out of music and PE for SOI. Older students want to be with classmates.
- That a rule—don't you dare send kids during P.E. or music.
- In our school that would fly.
- An alternative school—it would work well there.
- Getting students in elementary is essential. K-2 grades are very important.
- Working in whole classroom K-2 twice a week.
- Make use of the vision, balances, and focus areas.
- Early intervention, for sure.
- The [?] came to our school; others in the district want their kids in the lab. Modules they're not so interested in.
- No sense that school size makes a difference. Have to staff adequately (lab). Same aspects of modules are important; could be part of lab as stations, but daily use of modules in class--not necessary for all kids in class.
- Modules are too much for the regular classroom...another thing being added. Maybe need one sheet or so.
- But it's not that necessary for all kids in class—not everyone needs it. Time is so precious.
- I agree the modules works with self-directed, but there needs to be more instruction for others.
- One teacher loves last pages--end of modules, because challenges TAG kids.
- A school that does not have a high turnover of kids. We have constant turnover—this is not good. Also personnel--need at least 2 people in lab. Need for practicing lab skills everyday. Also, if Bridges would have presentation to all staff and parents, we would have had buy-in and teachers teaching it. Brochures were a good support piece with parents. Principal did not allow meeting. Unknown feeling among teachers—another pullout.
- Our teachers thought they were getting one thing and got another.

4. Over the course of the SOI Program in your school, what went well?

- Giving teachers another resource—feeling not so pushed against a wall.
- Success for kids: "Can Do."
- Better for referral to SOI: building strengths and weaknesses. Telling parents will help show outcomes. We will do this. Helped parents and teachers recognize that child doesn't have to go and be a lifer in Title I or on an IEP.
- Good behavior comes along with self-respect.
- Problem solving skills so much better on state scores because of modules. Lab has helped little Johnny develop. Kids and parents of kids in lab pass the word. "It really works."
- We don't have Title I...[students go to] either resource or [are] average. Really given our teachers an option that those kids need a program to help. Some teachers and parents who identify certain problems they have said, "I wish I would have had this." "Now I understand my child's needs and I'm going to fight for their rights."
- One thing that went well was the school wide atmosphere that SOI had certain absolute standards. Standing in the hall, standing in line. Polite things. Teachers have really picked up on that. Without some presence in school? Where there's no absolute standards. Personnel are busy. So much to do.
- My school has learned self-control. Teacher says, self-control and focus attention.
- Parent night.

- Student improvement in so many areas that people—aides, teachers, parents—are noticing, and how [SOI] overlapping into behavior and academics.
- We're working with all K students. Has worked very well, very positive.
- The vision piece--picking up kids that would not have been picked up. The knowledge base that we now have, especially for the teachers.
- Vision, behavior, self-esteem, reading level, handwriting, math. Handwriting!
- Getting teachers involved and into lab—whole group kindergarteners.
- Getting away from classroom modules—a big turning point. Letting go, not requiring modules.
- Ditto. They pooh-pooh that a lot.
- Total panic in the Fall; lost Janet. Got more organized, putting tape on the ground, made time to train students, and kids became more self reliant/independent--know what to do. Older ones train younger ones in what to do. Cuts required kids to be self-directed.
- This is the beauty of the program—the structure of program. Students need structure.
- Ditto—I love IPP—it allows self-direction for older kids, and this facilitates motivation.
- Getting extra equipment bought or made.
- In the 2nd year IDS allowed us to make judgment calls.
- Kids will come in and barter. Set new programs--don't need to do as many reps as in materials. IEP kids are so learned helpless. This program helps them to break out of that pattern. So many with defiance issues. They can control their own program--opportunities for kids to be in charge and be successful

5. When you think about the SOI Program in your school, were there any surprises for you as it unfolded over time? That is, did the Program have, in your view, any <u>unanticipated</u> outcomes or consequences?

- The attitude of staff totally changed when I as a teacher went out of the lab to the classroom…
- Less support from 4th and 5th teachers compared to last year. Think they don't want to spend the time on something that's going. Surprised how far kids can come in such a short amount of time. To see in 6 to 9 months what the program did for 5th graders, it's sad knowing what another year would have done for them.
- Thinking of 2 boys who were really quiet. SOI, then, suddenly, they became confident.
- Surprised about autistic student with workbook. Can do so many things from so many angles.
- But it's not a deterrent.
- Just changed our expectations.
- When we came to the focus group, we had thought we were not getting anywhere. But after the focus group we realized everybody was in the same boat.
- The kids do love it even though it's so structured. Even high-end kids want to come in. TAG kids want to be in lab—TAG kids being referred.
- We have kids that have worked so hard to graduate and then want to come back and continue.
- They're making these claims—yeah, right. Went in not fully believing. Had to prove claims to me. Now that it is going away, want to support it…it is not the only answer, but it is a piece, an important piece of serving the needs of kids.
- Listening to teachers and how they are being to identify issues with kids, especially vision.
- I have been trying to build their self-evaluation. Kids are harder on themselves; on evaluating themselves; setting high expectations for themselves. It builds ownership.
- I like how simplified the program is and how it builds step by step. Vision is a great part of balance, coordination, rhythm, and focus.
- Often find things in kids you would not expect, e.g. balance and rhythm in athletes. Has impact on motor skills.
- Makes sense with the brain research, etc.
- The 1st year I didn't explain about program. Now I know the kids react much better if I do explain. I thought kids would bawl and be upset. But, this isn't the case. Telling kids about vision problems--kids don't feel bad about vision problems, like they do learning disabilities, etc. They don't think vision

problems are something to feel bad about. Builds self esteem—showing kids why they are in lab, make them more aware. Answering their questions is very necessary. The 1st year, 5th graders recognized each other as problems. The 2nd year, I thought to myself, why not share? It works much better. It's a motivator for the students.

- Yes, and I also share printouts; shows areas of strengths as well as problems. High points and career choice. SOI has something for everything.
- I also share their referrals with them so they can understand.
- Some kids say, "I am dumb."
- Hits down a wasp's nest, because of SOI. We have a treatment to go with test diagnosis.
- Ditto. Finding kids falling through the cracks takes training lots of people in screening. It isn't a buy-in on tracking—with eyes, with optometrists.
- Even if SOI goes away, can still screen and find vision problems, but treatment goes away. SOI lead me to New York vision screening (kit was $600), then to developmental optometrists, then to activities that would help. Not patented activities/exercises we can do. Mass screenings don't work. SOI has taught us this, functional vision screening is needed-- near point vision is important.
- SOI has helped us understand what will help and why

6. Our evaluation has consistently shown that the SOI Program, across 16 to 19 schools in Oregon, has not met expectations for student achievement, behavior, etc. that were claimed for it by the developers. Why do you think that's been the case?

- The state is looking at the wrong goals.
- But the state was sold the same bill of goods we were. But not how it comes out.
- In real life I don't get the kids every time, all the time. Six classes for example, missed this week. That's the reality of the school system.
- Private vs. public school. Pay cash vs. Public school. Have concerns they based selling points on the Texas school that showed incredible academic progress, and now we have learned that probably wasn't the case. Maybe in Oregon we didn't have as far to go.
- If starting with really low scores and did SOI, was this really a statewide effort? I am disappointed we didn't get the numbers, but I don't have any regrets. Half of our school over time has gotten benefits and is better. So many of our kids are better for it. Teachers were able to separate out Sp Ed, etc. And we were expecting the lowest would become average. Not expecting baby steps. But we were sent low, low kids—we got those with situational issues. If we could take a look at each child, the huge baggage they came with, to see improvement.
- And they have to go home everyday to the same situation.
- I want to know why there's such a big discrepancy between Texas and what's going on here.
- Bridges has excellent sales staff. They sold us. But about the Program that really helps kids…I know the staff that's gone through this Program will not teach in the same way anymore.
- How can it affect attendance? There're kids moving in and out; little kids getting themselves to school—how can SOI change that? Our school has huge turnover. I am so surprised with the whole school evaluation. Three out of 4 children we have we don't have much to do with attendance, academics, and behavior. I am so surprised with the whole school evaluation. Whitworth gets the emotionally disturbed children in the district—this will affect statistics. They don't do modules. Only do IEPs. They aren't the kids I see.
- The claims in the early literature…
- State wants to fix scores.
- The state's measuring attendance, behavior, Special Education, [but] not the child. Did Bridges go to the state or did the state go to Bridges? State and all Goals 2000…I think they thought that would solve this.
- We can help that and do what we can with that, but we can't do it school wide.
- For us, different administration, so different behavior referral numbers. Different structured referral policy. Got in the way of seeing results. Lab only hits 20% of kids; looks for school wide results. Probably have gone up.

- Ours haven't changed. This has to do with what's at home. A lot of it is parental.
- SOI is only a piece of the picture. We have helped in so many areas which may not have showed.
- It's within the lab, not school wide. Claims probably should not have been made. Modules are not consistently implemented.
- Impact is at a child level. Claims made are based on the Texas experience. Oregon has a different system.
- It takes more than 1 year, for example, with the case studies.
- They weren't appropriate claims.
- They shouldn't have made those claims.
- Three years may not be long enough to see total effects of program. It takes time to see benefits.
- Many things are not in [the program's] control.
- We only touch a small percentage of kids.
- If we're looking at other schools/sites, it's inaccurate. Some test 81% the same test. Impossible.
- The 20% served [in lab] will show improved academics, behavior.
- Should focus on who is in lab in the areas specifically addressed by lab, including behavior.
- And use as criteria not only state testing, but also testing that teachers do, things that may not show up on standard test, like fine motor skills, reversals, etc.
- The state tests are too blunt. It's the day-to-day progress—portfolios will show change [and] improvement. Teacher judgment should also be included.
- Teacher's judgment is just as important as Oregon assessments.

7. Please describe the kind of student who is likely to benefit most from the SOI Lab.

- The frustrated learner: the kid has to be self-motivated. Some kids don't care to be fixed. Some don't care to be taught. Frustrated learner kids who want to learn vs. other kids who don't. Kids who want to learn will.
- ...Who have never had a success.
- Ones [students] who have family support. Motivated. Not being served by any other program in our school—They succeed. They have to be motivated. And the vision component...
- A clear deficit we can diagnose: vision, special problem. Young, primary. Then we can see huge goings on that carry over into schoolwork. But it leads me to the question, is it our success or their success?
- One kids said the exercises were too hard; he didn't want to do them. We were trying to motivate him. Now we notice he comes in to do all the exercises—he's a little better at working at them. Motivation is everything.
- Students with large and small motor skill deficits and focusing issues.
- Kids with self-esteem issues.
- Those who need focusing skills.
- Impulsive behavior kids—self control issues—in a small setting. Some kids need one-on-one their issues are so involved.
- Vision, but it takes longer.

8. What works with the Lab activities? That is, if a child improves in a given area <u>why</u> does he/she improve?

- Persistence
- Practice, repetition
- Younger ones who keep going—motivation; attitude.
- Praise them often—it constantly works. Even then some don't get it, but it works the best.
- Break it down to something they can do...success breeds success.
- Celebration of little steps. Ditto.
- I teach kids to laugh at themselves, their mistakes.

- How-to-charts: I've concentrated on using those this year. "This is what we're doing; this is how it'll help.' To be able to remind them. Not going to have a trampoline/board in classroom, so where can you succeed in the classroom? Something I didn't know before. Showing the kids where they can correlate with what they do in the classroom. It's real powerful to them—that connection. The kids who pick up on that connection are stronger in the classroom because of that.
- It works because they're successful.
- Treatments address gaps in development identified through assessment. There's a clear connection between assessment and treatment.
- It's a nice, neat, natural, slow process.
- One kid with rheumatoid arthritis very debilitated. This child has maintained, and SOI is the cause of this.
- It's very special to watch them succeed.
- TAG students need sensory motor skills, as well. It benefits them, too, but maybe not the most.
- It would be better if we could see them twice as much.

9. Are there children who have <u>not</u> shown improvement in the Lab? If yes, is there a common element on the part of those children that you can identify?

- Yes, an attitude that never changes.
- Ditto
- There're kids you can't motivate; make successful. They come from families that don't value education. Basically, our ones that fail don't care. Talk to their families and it's the same attitude.
- I have one kid—he was in SOI because he was privileged. His parents—they don't see a problem with his behavior—one of the "town fathers" children. Very political. Didn't have support at home, though, so he didn't improve. Kids value privilege.
- Have one who's a youngest child that's used to being babied. He refused to do things. We called mom in and she came, did some of the exercises. Set up system for if he didn't behave, but she wasn't consistent with consequences—he'd never had consistency. Lab—structured far beyond what he was used to, so he just shut down.
- Getting a kid to buy-in to what he's doing, and parent support.
- We have an after school for extra—kids who don't have parent support, ones who aren't doing, being helped or benefited. If kids don't buy-in then parents don't get them there. The kid is out the door. Kids really have not been helped—have an attitude that crosses over in every part of their lives. I've had 2 infecting the Program so bad I had to "un-invite" them.
- But those students are few and far between.
- But there are some we thought we really didn't do a lot for, [they remained] low when they left the program. Then they come back and we're like, 'Oh, wow." Teachers say about 1 child, 'such and such success story.' We thought we didn't help much. We don't know how the impact is going to come out.
- Home life—lack of parenting.
- Ditto.
- Some kids need more help than I can give, especially with vision/tracking. They need very professional help—a specific therapy program.
- The Soroptimists gave me $500 for a professional vision therapy program. A child is completely turned around.
- Are we going to be pro-active or reactive?
- If a child is not neurologically damaged, they will progress. But, if they are, they won't progress. Can be underlying physiological problems.
- Or if ADHD aren't on [taking] their medicines—goes back to parenting. Though these kids seem to function better in lab, small groups.
- Meds are an issue.
- SOI can't meet the claims.
- Can for those kids served.

10. Over the course of the last 3-plus years, it has been apparent that children have taken longer to complete their Programs than was originally intended. In your view, why has this been the case?

- Wendy- Some have very challenging problems. And the program is very long.
- School calendar.
- If we could see students twice as much, think of how much we could do.
- We're seeing them only 2 times per week. Then they may come late, or are absent.
- I don't think SOI understands schools.
- Took me a little while to realize that kids toward the end, waiting around. Scheduling activities in lab – some bottleneck—pile up so kids can't get as much work as they could. I bought a 4th balancing board from Julie.
- Takes an average of 1 and ½ [school] years.
- IPP students right on in terms of 1 and ½ years. Group--numbers make a difference. Six may be too many. Three or 4 may get through in about 6 months.
- 2nd graders are excelling; 4th and 5th graders are excelling. Little kids need adapted trampoline—less springs.

11. Over the 2, 3, or 4 years that SOI was in place in your school, how did teachers view the modules—what did you hear from them? Did their views change over time, and if so how?

- Ours have improved. Fought the first year because they had to incorporate them in the classroom. Of this years teachers several are devastated they won't have the modules next year. They incorporate modules into learning strands. Now they know how to use them.
- It helps they've done them for 3 years. They can now explain what it is/how they're going to help. Tell them, "Will help you be a better Nintendo player," and kids are like, "Oh, wow!"
- So much for 5th graders to learn and do with the modules they had. To the 5th grade teacher I finally said you don't have to do them in order—pick out the ones you can use. Really changed her attitude.
- The ones I thought weren't doing so much, are suddenly, and now that they're going these teachers are coming to me and asking what we have, what's left over.
- I think the administrator makes a difference. In our staff room can't even talk about modules—it's not a priority with the administrator, so it's not with the teachers.
- But the kids love them. I was one who didn't want modules in booklets. But now they're in a book and I really like that, because we can skip and go back.
- At Whitworth I think the modules go with those same philosophies: "whole lab." 5th grade teacher uses them as filler, no instruction. The ones [students] that really need it didn't get done with schoolwork so didn't get to SOI book. One 3rd grade teacher is using it consistently. One 4th grade teacher is right on.
- Going from modules to module books, though, lost some contact with teachers.
- Guidelines say we should meet once a month with teachers to discuss modules. What teacher has one hour to spend with this? I have time, but what teacher does?
- I started out trying to meet with teachers, and they weren't interested—they felt they could read it. Those teachers who are really interested will come and ask. We have 1 teacher who will not talk to me. More buy-in from K, 1st, and 2nd. Basically, they do the modules. Our K has gone from LOCAN and writing prep to workbooks. Teachers like it more, but kids don't enjoy as much. Two 3rd grades are fantastic. But lost the 4th and 5th. [It requires] too much time out of the day. It's done one week, or 1 time a month. One teacher did it for his 4th grade, but his 5th grade has done none.
- Goes back to primary—they understand development better.
- Think our 4th grade teacher is consistent on their own time that they should do it. But no instruction, I think. But [principal] has said if they finish the workbook he'll take them out to dinner.

- Some of our primary teachers think the workbooks are inconsistent—skip around too much in difficulty. I said, 'do what you want—do them in the order you want.'
- Our K teacher has mentioned doesn't know why they're spending time on LOCAN and 1st doesn't do it. So we've made adjustments.
- In our school, some teachers really believe in modules; some have a special education background. But even those teachers have time constraints.
- It depends. It varies among teachers and their beliefs in them. Writing module is helpful.
- Teachers are improving how often they are using them; have improved attitude. Amazed I hear more positive comments this time. I fudged--told teachers that if you want to make overheads, go ahead and do it. They felt better about this. IDS told them they could not. I also told them they could skip a page if they needed to. Teacher wouldn't use them if they could not use overheads. New teachers had a hard time; acted like they would use them and then they wouldn't. Too busy--had to go around the system. Overall, it's a little better.
- This year not quite as far along. Teachers know it won't go this coming year. We didn't use modules this year.
- We went to lab only this year.
- Needed more flexibility--not fair that some schools didn't have to do modules and some did.
- Had to go around IDS rules to get the teachers to use them.
- Our left over materials from previous years we used to make up programs.
- We do all that; pulled individual modules to fit students' needs.
- Worked with Jack Delaney to get credit. Had to go around IDS rules to get teacher to use them.
- Some teachers liked some things but not others.

12. In your view, what can one reasonably expect by way of student outcomes if the modules are implemented according to IDS' instructions?

- Think kids and teachers can make amazing discoveries learning. Upper level math pages are so useful, I felt, I took them to my college level math class to remediate.
- If I could do everything IDS wanted us to, I think we could have had gains. Kids like them, like doing them. But problem is you've got to have teacher buy-in, explanation. When that doesn't happen, you don't get them implemented as great.
- And it shouldn't be the SOI person in the school, but an expert.
- If teachers went through training on the modules…
- But you have to pay teachers to do that.
- At the very least, if the modules were taught the way we were told they should, it would open new avenues to learning.
- Would be interesting if they were given to teachers to do with as they want.
- I think some teachers are threatened by the modules, because they get into their weak areas. If the teacher doesn't/can't do it, teacher doesn't want to get into it with their kids.
- Have to be able to do that. I have found it's a way to connect with my children.
- Bridges hire an expert teacher as a resource to answer questions about the real world. Not as a trainer, just as a resource.
- I have no idea--no basis for evaluating that.
- We do a lot of correcting, so I think the result is a better, well-rounded student if given according to direction. May see day-to-day improvement. There can be a lot of learning in correction. Adds to holes in curriculum… we don't cover all the things covered in modules.
- Allows awareness for students of strengths and weaknesses; of what areas they need to work on.
- Ditto. Teachers tell me the same thing.
- Yes, it really applies to TAG kids—shows holes, gaps.
- More practice in areas—fine motor, attention to detail…
- Our curriculum doesn't cover those areas.

13. If a school person (a principal or teacher-leader) called you and said that the Bridges Program was going to start in that school in September, and asked you for advice on start-up and implementation, what would you say?

- Buy-in from school. Agreement: then you've bought in.
- Have to have buy-in from everybody.
- If a Bridges expert came in to entire staff.
- Timing is so important. One the very last day—no teachers wanted to sit through that. They felt threatened. And after 5 days of training I had to talk to them and I knew nothing—they got misinformation. I would insist on an expert coming in.
- All the teachers should do the test. Gives a whole new insight into why they're doing it. Look at profile after and see strengths, and areas they need to work on. Then they can see it in kids. See what teachers don't have now as adults—what kids could work on.
- I would like—need--to do lots more practice with students in the classroom. Okay, got screening, see weaknesses, now what?
- We first thought 1st steps were what the kids were supposed to be doing. We spent three weeks doing that until we figured out not supposed to!
- It's needed, each year, time to review and go over. There needs to be more practical support from Bridges than what we have had.
- Isn't that supposed to be what the site visit is for?
- Absolutely at the beginning. Teachers need to go through the same training as we did. A lot more buy-in as a result. If that were a priority, it would be better.
- I'd like to see it as part of teacher training coming out of college—bring it with them. They should come in with it as a requirement.
- I was taught development in a child at my college, but never about remediation of those.
- We get lots of teachers from WOU, and they've all heard of SOI.
- To me, it's looking at the whole child, treated-remedial, there're options out there. Just like a doctor is trained for.
- Start with lab only.
- Have presentation for all staff--understanding and buy-in.
- Ditto. Staff it adequately.
- Need to have that staff awareness, and the support of administrator. K – 2 focus. Get modules off teachers' backs, use the money to expand lab.
- There's only 1 teacher that teaches pencil grip.
- I believe in testing of IPP--good assessment. Maybe I would advise looking into another program that does many and same things that don't cost as much, like Brain Gym—does the same things. If it had the vision portion it would go with this. Small, quick exercises gets them ready to learn.

14. If IDS called you and asked for advice in redesigning its school Program, what would you say?

- Practical support, in front of staff a lot more. Face to face.
- Although we've been told Bridges instructors have been tested, they are in an ideal world—a private lab. They need to spend more time in a classroom. They have great ideas. David has great ideas. But they're not practical. David still owes me a steak dinner.
- About site reviews: I would like to see that be more instructive. It's like pulling teeth—David: 'sit down, tell us what we're doing wrong.' I don't want to be inspected. I want to be taught. Didn't give me the answers I needed.
- I have handed him test results of kids I am helping, and asked him to interpret, and he's not always able to do that.

- If we had a regular, annual insight, give-us-a-little-bit-more review. I feel like I have too much.
- I was told I could get a 2nd training if I had the money. I don't feel like I should have to pay out of pocket. Surely it should have been given us. There is more training but you have to pay the money.
- IDS didn't invest in us, in our growth.
- Like finding out IDS has a grant writing person who would help us write a grant. Why didn't we know that?
- We asked for it—Frank Mondeaux came to our school. We received a list of web sites. I spent a day on web foundations and I found 1 possible grant. To me, that's not help.
- For the amount of money we give to Bridges, I don't feel like we've gotten the support. And we have to make the contact.
- That first year Sue Pillows did, but we never heard from her again.
- The only time I heard from them about how things were going since December. A sales pitch: 'how are things going? Have funding? If no funding for that, how about this?' If this program has been around since the '60s, is this why they're charging so much for this intellectual license?
- Through SOI—the Meekers are negotiating the price down on computer program.
- Give us a choice of what we'd be doing. Lab only. To be trained by a person from/out of the public school system—not from a private clinic. Be consistent in communicating to us. Know that give and take is essential in schools.
- Once we receive our training, we should be in charge of our own program. Get training, and then make it our own.
- Need the same IDS evaluator each time. Had such an unclear picture at the beginning. Need choices in what we purchase; more flexibility.
- Part of the licensing fee is for site visit evaluator. Some of what we're being charged for is not appropriate.
- Better and quicker feedback on program implementation. Bring us together for focus groups—not wait until WOU does it.
- In 3 years they have called me once or twice. Site review needs to be complete, look at every exercise--not look at just what is happening at the time.
- Need people on their staff with more school setting experience. Clinical experience is not helpful. Need people who know how to run a MAC (computer) program.
- They're trying, but look what they're charging—it's not good enough. For the cost they should be doing more than just trying their best—they should be 1st rate.

15. If the Oregon Legislature's Committee on Education called you and asked for advice on continuing, changing, or discontinuing the Program, what would you say?

- Continue.
- Continue, with modifications. Lower the price.
- [Consensus] Continue.
- To have K, 1st, and 2nd all go through the SOI portion. It would cut down on a lot of problems. The lab and the modules, statewide.
- [Consensus:] Statewide.
- Remind them that at schools we are surrogate parents, why should we not be able to help them develop? We feed them, offer counseling—why can't we get them developmental help? SOI is one way. The crux of our problems—Ks come to school with less and less ability. If we're in charge of fixing other social ills, why not the development of children?
- Discuss the idea that it's a positive resource to put in our schools. Without the modules, it's a small cost for a child. If we had latitude outside of SOI, with funding the way it is in the state, to have personnel in school that has experience helping kids in school. The most important thing I have been able to do is make these judgments.
- To quote Vickie last year, 'if they don't get it now, they can get it in prison.'

- To detect vision problems early so they don't feel failure for years until they might get help. To educate everybody about this. Well, some do screening, but don't know how to interpret it. Need to have those resources available. In our area, it's 0 miles to get help. And people don't have insurance that covers it.
- I do want to note Bridges has listened as things have changed. But I think they are selective. I have asked for 3 years for a narrative . . .
- I would say to the legislator please look at individual children, not such a global thing.
- When I read the reports—the case studies—nearly everyone says it's helped in some aspects.
- Ask some of the committee members to get to a school site and observe. Talk to children and parents involved and people that have run the Program. If they can make a decision after they've seen the lab. Tony Cochran from Cottage grove spent 3 hours one afternoon. He said, "This is totally different world—different view from what I have seen until now." He asked the children, who answered like we had them in rote: "You should have seen me when I started! Now I can do this, this, and this...."
- Continue, with modifications. Keep modules in upper grades: 3, 4, and 5. Be able to tailor the program to the school's needs.
- Can we not use SOI/Bridges materials? Why can't we glean what does work? Take out what we need?
- Do program with modifications. There're a lot of schools that need it. Could modify pretty easily.
- Other schools want to have the program—want to send their kids. But, we wrote the grant...
- I don't see it making any difference.
- Treatments do take time—we're not given the time.
- If legislature funds it again, fund it for 5 years.

SOI Pilot Program Case Studies, 2000-01

Case Study 1
Adrian Elementary School
At the end of the 2000-01 school year, Case Study 1 was in the 4th grade.

Background Information
Case Study 1 was a twin. The student was diagnosed with cerebral palsy (mild hemiplegia) that had resulted in delayed motor skills affecting the left side. In the 1st grade she was retained. This school year her attendance was good. As reported by her parents and classroom teacher, Case Study 1's self-concept was good, and she did not exhibit behavior problems.

The student continued on an Individualized Educational Program (IEP) and received the services of the occupational therapist, resource room teacher, and speech/language pathologist.

Since February of 1998, Case Study 1 has participated in the SOI Lab, as well as SOI activities in the classroom. The initial referral was for gross motor skills, handwriting, and academic skills. She completed the Program, but was referred again.

The latest recorded results for the Oregon Statewide Assessment (2000) showed the student did not meet the standard for Reading or Mathematics.

Parent Information
There were no changes in the health information of Case Study 1 except for the addition of glasses to correct vision. It was reported that the student's academics have continued to progress. Her parents noted that the SOI Program had helped their daughter with the physical impact of cerebral palsy and her vision. They rated the impact of the SOI Program from fair improvement in reading and mathematics to good improvement in written expression, handwriting, and attention.

SOI Teacher Information
The SOI teacher reported that Case Study 1 had been in the Program 3½ years. She graduated from the Program the end of the second grade, but was referred again in the third grade. The occupational therapist reported to the SOI teacher she had seen gains in visual perception, an increase of the use of both hands, and an improved ability to focus. These gains were attributed to the SOI Program. The SOI teacher was unable to respond to how the SOI Program had had an impact on the student's academics, but she reported good improvement in handwriting and attention. Also, good improvement in gross motor skills was attributed to the SOI Program.

Classroom Teacher Information
The classroom teacher reported Case Study 1's word recognition and reading comprehension were at the second grade level, while her listening comprehension, written expression, and mathematics were at the third grade level. Handwriting was noted as being appropriate for her grade placement. When rating the impact of the SOI Program, all academic areas were rated as fair and attention was rated as good.

SOI Impact
The respondents were in agreement that the SOI Program had impacted Case Study 1 positively in academics and attention. Parents and the classroom teacher reported fair improvement related to the SOI Program in reading and mathematics, while the parent noted there was good improvement in written expression. The teacher rated this latter area as fair. Improvement in handwriting was rated from good by the parent and SOI teacher to fair by the classroom teacher. All respondents rated improvement in attention as good. The SOI teacher added that she had seen good improvement, attributed to the SOI Program, in gross motor skills. Although the occupational therapist had not completed a rating scale, she had reported to the SOI teacher she had seen gains in the student attributable to the SOI Program.

Case Study 2
Evergreen Elementary School
At the end of the 2000-01 school year, Case Study 2 was in the 4th grade.

Background Information
Case Study 2's medical history continued to be unremarkable. Her school attendance has continued to be good. Attention and self-concept at school had been a problem last year, but were seen as improved areas this year. The student was reported by her classroom teacher as being about a year below grade level in reading, mathematics, and written expression.

In the Fall of 1999 the student was placed on an Individualized Educational Program (IEP) for reading and mathematics. The IEP was still in place for the 2000-01 school year.

From October 1999 until the student graduated from the Program in January 2001, she participated in the SOI Lab. The initial referral was for low performance in mathematics and reading, lower self-esteem, and poorer focusing skills. She was involved in SOI activities in the classroom during the 1999-2000 school year.

The latest recorded results for the Oregon Statewide Assessment (2000) revealed the student did not meet the Benchmark 1 standard for Reading or for Mathematics.

Parent Information
Case Study 2's parents reported their daughter did not continue to exhibit behavior problems. Academics were still weak, but they reported she had made steady progress. They noted that the SOI Program had helped with improved attitude and school performance. The impact of the SOI Program was rated with good improvement in reading and mathematics, while the impact on written expression and handwriting was reported as fair. Impact of the SOI Program on attention and self-concept were rated as excellent. Coordination was another area seen as improving as the result of the SOI Program. This category was written in and rated as excellent.

SOI Teacher Information
Case Study 2 was in the SOI Program for 13 months. It was reported she enjoyed coming to the Program, and although she had finished the Program, she would ask the SOI teacher if she could return. The SOI teacher reported SOI Program impact on the child's self-concept was good. The SOI teacher was unable to respond to impact in other areas. She noted the reading specialist thought the SOI Program had assisted the student with focusing better and paying attention longer.

Classroom Teacher Information
The classroom teacher reported Case Study 2's word recognition, reading comprehension, mathematics, and written expression were at the 3rd grade level, while listening comprehension and handwriting were at the 4th grade level. When rating the impact of the SOI Program, written expression and mathematics were rated as fair, while reading was rated as good. The classroom teacher did not know whether or not the Program had had an impact on handwriting or attendance. Improvement in attention was attributed to the Program and was rated as excellent, while self-concept was rated as good.

SOI Impact
The SOI teacher responded only to the question about self-concept, and, on that question, she rated the impact of the SOI Program on Case Study 2 as good. According to the other respondents, this area was rated as excellent by her parents and good by the classroom teacher. Parents and the classroom teacher reported good to fair improvement related to the SOI Program in reading, mathematics, and written expression. Improvement in handwriting was rated as fair by the parents, while the classroom teacher did not know the impact of the Program on that area. The respondents saw improvement in the area of attention as excellent. The SOI Specialist reported that the reading specialist had observed the same improvement in attention.

Case Study 3
Goshen Elementary School
At the end of the 2000-01 school year, Case Study 3 was in the 4th grade.

Background Information
Case Study 3 was an only surviving twin. Other than continued problems with ear infections, his current medical history was unremarkable. In the first grade the student was retained. It was reported that school attendance continued to be good. As reported by his parents and classroom teacher, Case Study 3's self-concept and behavior in the academic setting were not a problem this school year.

The student has been on an Individualized Educational Program (IEP) for language and academics, with services being received of the resource room teacher and speech/ language pathologist. The IEP was initiated in 1997 for language, and in 1999 he was placed on an IEP for learning disabilities.

The student started in the SOI Lab, as well as SOI activities in the classroom, in 1999. He was referred to the SOI Lab because of lower achievement in academics and focusing/attention.

The student was exempted from taking the Oregon Statewide assessment.

Parent Information
Case Study 3's parents reported their son now had a good self-concept and got along well with others. It was reported that the student had continued to make academics progress. His parents noted that the SOI Program had helped their son to concentrate on one task at a time. They rated the impact of the SOI Program as fair in reading, written expression, and handwriting, good in attention and self-concept, and excellent in mathematics and behavior.

SOI Teacher Information
The SOI teacher reported the student "loved" the SOI Program. The impact of the SOI Program on the student's academics and self-concept was not known, but attention was rated as fair.

Classroom Teacher Information
The classroom teacher reported that the student's word recognition, reading comprehension, written expression, and handwriting were at the 2nd grade level, while his listening comprehension and mathematics were at the 3rd grade level. When rating the impact of the SOI Program, the academic areas of reading, written expression, and handwriting were rated as fair, while mathematics was rated as good. The impact on self-concept and attention was rated as good. The classroom teacher commented that the influence of the SOI Program had been beneficial not only for this student, but for other students in the school.

SOI Impact
The classroom teacher and the parents were in agreement that the SOI Program had a fair impact on Case Study 3 in academics, except for mathematics, which his parents rated as showing excellent improvement, and his classroom teacher as showing good improvement. Self-concept was reported as having good improvement, attributable to the SOI Program by his parents and the classroom teacher. The SOI teacher rated improvement in attention as fair. The respondents reported excellent to fair improvement related to the SOI Program in each of the areas listed.

Case Study 4
McGovern Elementary School
At the end of the 2000-01 school year, Case Study 4 was in the 4th grade.

Background Information
Case Study 4 continued to be diagnosed with depression and takes medication for it. The rest of his current medical history was unremarkable. As reported by his parents and classroom teacher, the student's self-concept in the academic setting continued to be low, while behavior was noted to not be a problem. In the 3rd grade he was retained. The student was home-schooled for approximately three months this school year.

The student was placed on an Individualized Educational Program (IEP) for language in 2000, with services being received from the speech/ language pathologist. He continued on an IEP for the 2000-01 school year.

The student was referred to the SOI Lab in the Fall of 1999 because of low self-concept, poor attention span, and performance in areas of academics. Last school year and this year he was involved in the Lab as well as in SOI activities in the classroom. He had not graduated from the SOI Program, due in part to being home-schooled for three months.

On the 2000 Oregon State Assessment, he met the standards for Reading and Mathematics.

Parent Information
Case Study 4's parents reported that their son's self-concept and ability to stay on task were weak areas. General behavior and his ability to get along with others were not problem areas. It was reported that he continued to make academic progress, although reading and spelling gave him some trouble. His parents noted that they could not attribute any changes to the SOI Program.

SOI Teacher Information
The SOI teacher reported Case Study 4 always enjoyed coming to the Lab. The impact of the Program on the student's academics was not known. Attention was noted to show fair improvement, while the impact on behavior and self-concept were rated as good.

Classroom Teacher Information
The classroom teacher reported that Case Study 4's academic areas were all a year below his present grade placement. Difficulty with expression and independent work habits were evident. When rating the impact of the SOI Program on academics, she reported she could not respond, mainly because the student refused to do any work in class.

SOI Impact
The classroom teacher did not feel she had enough information to rate the SOI Program's impact on Case Study 4, while the parents could not see any impact attributable to the SOI Program. The SOI teacher was unsure about the influence on academics, but she reported a fair impact on attention and good impact on behavior and self-concept.

Case Study 5
Milner Crest Elementary School
At the end of the 2000-01 school year, Case Study 5 was in the 4th grade.

Background Information
Case Study's 5 medical history continued to be relatively uneventful, although she continued on medication for attention deficit hyperactivity disorder. Her school attendance was good this school year. As reported by her parents and resource room teacher, Case Study 5 continued to exhibit difficulty with behavior and social skills.

At school, an Individualized Educational Program (IEP) was still in place for reading, written and oral language, and mathematics, and the student received the services of the resource room teacher, speech/ language pathologist, and Title I teacher. She was placed on an IEP initially in 1999.

During the 1999-2000 school year, the student was referred to the SOI Lab because of slow academic progress. She had participated in the SOI Lab, as well as in SOI activities in the classroom. In 2000-01, the student continued in the SOI Lab, but not in classroom SOI activities.

The latest recorded results for the Oregon Statewide Assessment (2000) showed the student did not meet the standard for Reading or Mathematics. Her scores were based on modified test taking.

Parent Information
Case Study 5's mother reported that this year her daughter was experiencing headaches and difficulty sleeping. While her daughter continued to be difficult to manage, medication had helped. It was noted that the student had a good self-concept, although she had problems making friends. Progress had continued to be made in academics. Her mother related that her daughter had commented that the SOI Program was fun. She thought it had helped her daughter with improving areas of academics, but not behavior. She rated the impact of the SOI Program with excellent improvement in reading and good improvement in mathematics. The impact on handwriting was reported as poor, while any improvement in written expression attributed to the SOI Program was unknown. The SOI Program was rated as not having an impact on behavior or attention.

SOI Teacher Information
The SOI teacher reported that Case Study 5 had been in the SOI Program for 2 years. She had not graduated from the Program. It was reported the student liked to attend the SOI Lab, but she tended to have difficulty focusing on an activities during practice time. The SOI teacher was unable to respond to how the SOI Program had impacted the student's academics, but she reported fair improvement in handwriting, behavior, self-concept, and attention.

Classroom Teacher Information
The classroom teacher form was completed by the special education teacher. She reported that she thought the classroom teacher would not complete the form, and added she knew the student well. The student's word recognition was at the 5th grade level, while reading and listening comprehension, mathematics, and handwriting were at the 4th grade level. Written expression was at the 3rd grade level. When rating the impact of the SOI Program, all of the academic areas were rated as good, while improvement in self-concept and attention were rated as fair.

SOI Impact
According to the raters that responded, the SOI Program impacted Case Study 5 in a positive manner in academics and attention. The parent and the resource room teacher reported fair improvement related to the SOI Program in reading and mathematics, while the parent did not know about any changes in written expression, the resource room teacher rated this area as good. Improvement in handwriting was rated as good by the resource room teacher, fair by the SOI teacher, and poor by the parent. All respondents rated improvement in self-concept as good, while the resource room teacher and SOI teacher rated behavior and attention as good. The parent did not see any improvement in the latter two areas.

Case Study 6
Rhododendron Elementary School
At the end of the 2000-01 school year, Case Study 6 was in the 4th grade.

Background Information
Case Study 6's medical history continued to be unremarkable, except for occasional headaches. The student's school attendance through April of this year was fair, having 13 absences. The student was reported by her classroom teacher as being below grade level in reading, written expression, and mathematics.

The student continued on an Individualized Educational Program (IEP) for reading and mathematics. The initial date of the IEP was 1999, and instructional objectives at that time were for reading and written language.

The student was referred to the SOI Lab the beginning of the 1999-2000 school year and continued for one year. Her mother requested her daughter not attend the SOI Lab for this school year. Case Study 6 did not participate in SOI activities in the classroom during the 1999-2000 school year. Behavior and self-concept were not considered an issue, while her mother reported attention being a problem.

The latest recorded results for the Oregon Statewide Assessment (2000) revealed the student did not meet the standard for total reading or for mathematics.

Parent Information
Case Study 6's parent reported her daughter did not continue to have behavior problems, although staying on task was sometimes a problem. Her self-concept was reported to be good. Academics were noted to still be weak. The student's parent reported that although her daughter had not liked going to the SOI Lab, she attributed fair progress in academics and good improvement in attention to the SOI Program.

SOI Teacher Information
The SOI teacher reported that Case Study 6 was referred to the Program in the Fall of 1999 because of general learning difficulties. Although she did not finish the Program as the parents refused services for this school year, the student had made progress and probably would have graduated this school year. The SOI teacher was unable to respond to how the SOI Program had impacted the student.

Classroom Teacher Information
The classroom teacher reported Case Study 6's word recognition, reading comprehension, written expression, and listening comprehension were at the middle 2nd grade level, while mathematics was at the middle 3rd grade level. When asked to rate the impact of the SOI Program, he related that he did not feel he had enough information to respond with that information.

SOI Impact
The student participated in the SOI Program in the Lab and in the classroom for last school year only. The SOI teacher and the classroom teacher could not respond to questions related to the impact of the SOI Program on Case Study 6. The student's parent reported that the student did not like going to the SOI Lab. Only fair improvement could be related to the SOI Program in reading, mathematics, written expression, and handwriting. Good improvement in attention was credited to the SOI Program by the student's parent.

Case Study 7
Thurston Elementary School
At the end of the 2000-01 school year, Case Study 7 was in the 4th grade.

Background Information
Except for allergies, Case Study 7's medical history continued to be unremarkable. His school attendance was good. As reported by his parents and classroom teacher, Case Study 7 was not a behavior problem now.

The student continued to be on an Individualized Educational Program (IEP) for reading, written language, and language. He was initially placed on an IEP in 1998.

In 1998 the student started in the SOI Lab, as well as SOI activities in the classroom. He was referred to the Lab because of weaker reading skills and behavior. He continued in the SOI Lab and classroom activities for the 1999-2000 and 2000-01 school year. He was slated to graduate from the Program in June 2001.

The latest recorded results were for the 2000 Oregon Statewide Assessment. At that time, the student did not met Benchmark standards for Reading or for Mathematics.

Parent Information
The parent reported Case Study 7 had continued to make academic progress. The impact of the SOI Program was rated with excellent improvement in reading and handwriting, and good improvement in mathematics, written expression, attention, and self-concept. No impact was reported on behavior. The parent related the Program had helped the student feel like he had accomplished something. She added she was unhappy the Program would not be continuing, because it had helped not only her son, but also other students in the school.

SOI Teacher Information
The SOI teacher reported Case Study 7 had been referred in 1998 to the SOI Lab for low academic performance, lack of focus, and behavior problems. He was scheduled to graduate the end of the 2000-01 school year. The SOI teacher rated academics as showing fair improvement related to the SOI Program, while mathematics was rated as good. Behavior and attention were rated as good, and self-concept was rated as excellent. The SOI teacher reported the 2nd and 3rd grade classroom teachers mentioned the Program had helped the student with academic skills and focusing. Both the student's parent and resource room teacher related to the SOI teacher that they agreed with the classroom teachers.

Classroom Teacher Information
The classroom teacher reported that, except for reading comprehension, which was at grade level, Case Study 7's academics were at least a year below his present grade placement. It was reported his handwriting was much weaker than his peers'. When rating the SOI Program, the teacher rated the impact of the student's reading, written expression, and handwriting as fair, and mathematics as good. Attention and self-concept were rated as good.

SOI Impact
The SOI teacher and classroom teacher were in agreement that, as the result of the SOI Program, reading, written expression, and handwriting had shown fair improvement, while mathematics and attention had shown good improvement. Improvement in reading and handwriting were rated as excellent, while mathematics, written expression, and attention was rated as fair by Case Study 7's parent. The student's parent was in agreement with the classroom teacher that there was no impact on behavior, but the SOI teacher reported good improvement in that area. The classroom teacher thought good improvement in self-concept was attributed to the SOI Program, while this area was rated as excellent by the SOI teacher and fair by the student's parent.

The SOI teacher reported on the questionnaire the 2nd and 3rd grade teachers, parent, and resource room teacher thought the Program had helped the student with academic skills and focusing.

Case Study 8
Bear Creek Elementary School
At the end of the 2000-01 school year, Case Study 8 was in the 5th grade.

Background Information
Case Study 8's medical history was unremarkable except for chronic ear infections, resulting in four sets of tubes in the child's ears. In kindergarten he was retained. The student's school attendance was good for the 2000-01 academic year. As reported by his parents and classroom teacher, the student was not a behavior problem and self-concept was thought to be good.

The student continued to be on an Individualized Educational Program (IEP) for written language and received services of the resource room teacher. The initial IEP was in 1997.

The student started in the SOI Lab in 1998, as well as SOI activities in the classroom. Case Study 8 had been referred to the SOI Lab for reading, writing, and focusing concerns. He continued in the SOI Lab for the 1999-2000 school year, but, even though he did not graduate from the Program, he did not return for the 2000-01 school year.

The latest recorded results were for the 2000 Oregon PLUS Test. The standards were met for the Reading and Mathematics tests.

Parent Information
Case Study 8's parents reported that although their son had good self-concept, he had commented at times that he was "dumb." He exhibited good behavior and social skills. It was reported that the student had continued to make academics progress. The parents noted the SOI Program had really helped their son. In all areas of academics, the impact of the SOI Program was rated from good to fair improvement for handwriting and self-concept. Behavior and attention were not considered areas of concern.

SOI Teacher Information
The SOI teacher reported Case Study 8 was in the Program for two school years (1998-2000), but did not return this 2000-01 school year. Although it appeared to the SOI teacher improvement had been made in the activities he did in the classroom, she could not rate how this had impacted the student's academics, attention, self-concept, or behavior. She did note that the classroom teachers from last year and this year had commented that they had seen lot of improvement in the student. In addition, she noted his parent was pleased with his progress.

Classroom Teacher Information
The classroom teacher reported that Case Study 8's word recognition and written expression were about a year below his present grade placement, while his handwriting was much weaker than his peers. Reading and listening comprehension was at the 6th grade level, while his mathematics was at grade level. When rating the impact of the SOI Program, the student's academics was rated as good for all areas except for the impact on handwriting, and this area was rated as poor. The teacher commented that the skills gained in the SOI Program were used in the classroom. Improvement related to involvement in the SOI Program was rated as good for behavior, attention, and self-concept.

SOI Impact
The SOI teacher did not think she had enough information to rate Case Study 8's improvement related to the SOI Program, but the classroom teacher and parents were in agreement that the SOI Program had impacted the student in academics and gave these areas a good rating, while handwriting was rated as fair by the parent and poor by the classroom teacher. The classroom teacher attributed good improvement in behavior and attention to the SOI Program, while these areas were not considered areas of concern by the parent. Improvement in self-concept was seen as good by the teacher and fair by the parent.

Case Study 9
Milner Crest Elementary School
At the end of the 2000-01 school year, Case Study 9 was in the 7th grade and attending Sunset Middle School.

Background Information
Case Study 9 continued on medication for anxiety and depression. A vision exam was completed in 1999, and he was prescribed eyeglasses for nearsightedness by an ophthalmologist. Case Study 9's school attendance was good for the 2000-01 academic year. A positive self-concept was reported, while some difficulty with attentiveness was noted. The summer of 1999, a Neurologist and Psychologist at the Oregon Health Sciences University diagnosed him as having Asperger syndrome.

At school, the student continued on an Individualized Educational Program (IEP) for language/pragmatics. He started receiving these services in 1998. In addition, he received services through an Occupational Therapist for sensory integration.

In 1998 the student started in the SOI Lab, but not in SOI activities in the classroom for that school year. He was referred because of lower achievement in mathematics, and a discrepancy between his verbal and performance skills. He attended the SOI Lab during the 1998-99 school year and during that summer. It was reported by his parent that he graduated from the SOI Program.

The Oregon Achievement Test was administered in the Fall of 2000. The student's scores for Reading were in the very high range, while Mathematics was within the average range.

Parent Information
The parent reported that Case Study 9 continued to do well in reading, but less well in mathematics. His parent noted that she believed the SOI Program had helped with his being "...more careful and accurate and faster in following instructions, both in whole-body motor activities and paper activities." She added that the Occupational Therapist thought the SOI Program had been valuable. The impact of the SOI Program was rated with good improvement in all areas, except written expression, which was rated as excellent. She added that excellent improvement in accuracy could be attributed to the student's involvement in the SOI Program.

SOI Teacher Information
The SOI teacher was new for this school year, and she knew nothing about Case Study 9, who had progressed on to a middle school.

Classroom Teacher Information
The information on Case Study 9 was provided by the Speech/Language Pathologist, with input from the student's teachers. She reported that the student was performing at the 8th grade level in all areas, with the exceptions of listening comprehension, regarded to be at the 7th grade level, and handwriting at the 2nd grade level. Areas of speech, expression, independent work habits, and social development were noted to be weak areas for the student. She provided the student services for language. She reported that the SOI Program had been mentioned at an Individualized Educational Program (IEP) meeting and she thought it had had an impact, but she was not sure how much. She could not rate the impact of the SOI Program.

SOI Impact
Case Study 9's parent reported that the SOI Program had impacted the student positively in academics, social skills, and attention. The parent added that the Program had helped in the accuracy in following directions. She added that the occupational therapist had seen the Program as helping the student. Neither the SOI teacher nor the Speech/Language Pathologist could provide information on the impact the SOI Program had on the student.

Case Study 10
Rhododendron Elementary School
At the end of the 2000-01 school year, Case Study 10 was in the 7th grade and attending Siuslaw Middle School.

Background Information
Case Study 10's current medical history was unremarkable. His school attendance was good for the 2000-01 academic year. As reported by his parents and classroom teacher, there were no concerns about the student's behavior, self-concept, or school attendance.

The student continued to be on an Individualized Educational Program (IEP) for reading and mathematics. The services received were in the form of modified work if needed. The initial IEP was started in 1998. (A school psychologist report shared by the parent suggested that the student had made sufficient academic gains and would possibly be taken off the IEP for the 2001-2002 school year.)

In 1998 the student started in the SOI Lab, as well as SOI activities in the classroom for that school year. The SOI teacher reported the student had been referred to the SOI Lab because he had been diagnosed with developmental vision problems. He attended the SOI Lab during the 1998-1999 school year, and during two consecutive summers. He graduated from the Program the summer of 2000.

The latest recorded results were for the 2000 Oregon PLUS Test. The student met the standards for Reading, but not for Mathematics.

Parent Information
The parent reported that Case Study 10 had continued to make progress in academics, although reading was still a problem for him. His parent noted that the student had liked the SOI Program and felt it had helped the student. She rated the impact of the SOI Program as good improvement in academics. The other areas of behavior, attention, and self-concept were not rated, because they had not been problem areas. A comment was made that it was believed that the "visual training/tracking had made lots of difference in reading." In addition, she related that good improvement in spelling could be attributed to the student's involvement in the SOI Program.

SOI Teacher Information
The SOI teacher conveyed that the student's parent reported that the student's reading level went up significantly after spending time in the SOI Lab. Although attention and self-concept were not considered problems for the student, it was reported that while in the Lab he seemed to focus better and to be encouraged by his accomplishments. The impact of the Program on the student's academics was rated as excellent for reading. The SOI teacher did not have information about the other academic areas, but rated improvement in behavior, attention, and self-concept as excellent.

Classroom Teacher Information
The classroom teacher reported that Case Study 10's reading comprehension was at the 6th grade level as measured on the STAR test. Listening comprehension, written expression, and mathematics were at grade level. The student's classroom teacher rated the impact of the SOI Program, but commented he did not know much about the SOI Program and was not sure how much progress was related to that Program. He rated good improvement in all academic areas, behavior, and attention. Self-concept and handwriting were rated as excellent. He commented that the student was generally a motivated and independent learner.

SOI Impact
Case Study 10's parent, classroom teacher, and SOI teacher were in agreement that the SOI Program had a positive impact on the student's reading. The SOI teacher rated reading improvement as excellent, while his parent and classroom teacher rated this area as good. His parent reported good improvement in handwriting; his classroom teacher reported excellent improvement. The SOI teacher rated excellent improvement in behavior, attention, and self-concept, while the classroom teacher reported good improvement in behavior and attention. The classroom teacher rated improvement in self-concept as excellent. The parent of Case Study 10 did not rate behavior, attention, or self-concept. A reference was made by his parent that improved visual tracking as a result of the SOI Program had helped with reading, and the Program had helped with spelling, as well.

Case Study 11

Sweetbriar Elementary School

At the end of the 2000-01 school year, Case Study 11 was in the 5th grade.

Background Information

Case Study 11 is one of twins. Current medical history was unremarkable. He has worn glasses since 1998, when a vision problem was found as the result of screening in the SOI Lab. His school attendance was good for the 2000-01 academic year. In kindergarten he was retained. As reported by her parents and classroom teacher, Case Study 1 had weaker self-concept, while no behavior problems were noted at home, yet some problems in this area were reported at school.

The student continued to be on an Individualized Educational Program (IEP) for language, and received services of the resource room teacher and speech/ language pathologist.

In 1998 he started in the SOI Lab, as well as SOI activities in the classroom. After 11 months in the SOI Lab he graduated out of the Program.

The latest recorded results were for the 2000 Oregon PLUS Test. On a modified test for Reading the student met the standards, while he did not meet the standards on the unmodified Mathematics test.

Parent Information

Case Study 11's parents noted their son had a good self-concept and did not exhibit problems with behavior. They reported that their son had continued to make academics progress. They reported the student "loved" the SOI Program, and felt it had been very helpful to their son. They rated the impact of the SOI Program with good improvement in attention and academics, and fair improvement in handwriting.

SOI Teacher Information

The SOI teacher reported the student had graduated from the Program after 13 months. The impact of the Program on the student's academics was rated as excellent for mathematics, good for reading, and fair for written expression and handwriting. Impact on self-concept was seen as excellent, while behavior and attention was viewed as good.

Classroom Teacher Information

The classroom teacher reported that the student's word recognition and reading comprehension were at the 4th grade level, while his listening comprehension and mathematics were at the fifth grade level. Written expression and handwriting were at the 3rd grade level. When rating the impact of the SOI Program, the academic areas of written expression and handwriting were rated as fair, while reading was rated as good and mathematics as excellent. The impact on self-concept was rated as excellent with attention and behavior rated as good. The teacher commented that the influence of the SOI Program could be seen in improved focusing skills, improved self-concept, increased interaction in groups, and, as related to mathematics, more ease with memorizing.

SOI Impact

The participants were in agreement that the SOI Program had impacted Case Study 11 positively in academics and self-concept, while the school noted improvements in behavior and attentiveness. The raters reported excellent to fair improvement related to the SOI Program in each of the areas listed.

Case Study 12
Thurston Elementary School
At the end of the 2000-01 school year, Case Study 12 was in the 7th grade and attending Pioneer Youth Corps, an alternative school.

Background Information
Case Study 12's medical history continued to be unremarkable. His school attendance was good for the 2000-01 academic year. In the first grade he was retained. The student was interviewed and was accepted to the alternative military-like school in February of 2001. The impetus for this school change was poor grades, according to the school counselor at the middle school he had last attended. As reported by his parent and classroom teacher, Case Study 12 exhibited problems with paying attention, following directions, and behavior. His self-concept and school attendance were not noted to be problems.

During the 1998-99 school year he was referred to the SOI Lab for low mathematics and written language performance, and for behavior problems. The student was in the SOI Lab and participated in SOI activities in the classroom for that school year. He graduated out of the Program in the Spring of the 1998-99 school year.

There were no current state assessment results for Case Study 12 that were available. His last academic grades for middle school were below average.

Parent Information
The parent reported that Case Study 12's school performance had declined, but was getting better since starting the new school. She rated the impact of the SOI Program as fair improvement in academics, behavior, attention, and self-concept.

SOI Teacher Information
The SOI teacher reported that the classroom teacher has stated the SOI Program seemed to calm the student and increase his focus. The principal noted it had helped his behavior, while his parent reported it had improved his self-concept and concentration. The student stated that the Program helped him work harder in the classroom. The impact of the Program for the 1998-99 school year on Case Study 12's performance was rated as good for academics and behavior, excellent for self-concept, and fair for attention.

Classroom Teacher Information
The classroom teacher reported that Case Study 12's word recognition was at the 3rd grade level, while reading comprehension, mathematics, and written expression were at the 4h grade level. His listening comprehension was at the 5th grade level. The teacher was unfamiliar with the SOI Program, thus he could not rate the impact of the Program on the student. He did comment that the student was likable, but he was often distracted by other students, which impacted his ability to complete his academic work. Behavior continued to be a problem for the student.

SOI Impact
Since moving on to middle school and then to an alternative school, Case Study 12's academic achievement and behavior had reportedly declined. Even in an especially structured setting he continued to have difficulties. The classroom teacher was not knowledgeable about how the SOI Program had impacted the student. His parent related that the Program had a fair impact on the student. As reported by the SOI teacher, the Program had impacted the student positively while he was in the SOI Pilot Program School, but given the other information the perceived positive impact of the SOI Program did not appear to generalize to other settings.

Case Study 13
Waldport Elementary School
At the end of the 2000-01 school year, Case Study 13 was in the 5th grade.

Background Information
Case Study 13 has been diagnosed with Tourette syndrome, attention problems, anxiety/fears, oppositional behavior, and post-traumatic stress syndrome. He continued on medication. The rest of his medical history was unremarkable. As reported by his classroom teacher, Case Study 13 continued with academic and behavior difficulties. In the second grade he was retained. The student's school attendance was good for the 2000-01 academic year.

The student continued on an Individualized Educational Program (IEP) for behavior problems and academics, with services being received of the resource room teacher and counselor. The initial IEP was initiated in December 1997.

The student started in the SOI Lab, as well as SOI activities in the classroom, in 1998. He was referred to the SOI Lab because of problems with academics and behavior. The SOI Program was in the school for one academic year.

Case Study 13's most recent scores for a state assessment were not reported.

Parent Information
Case Study 13's parent reported that the student was making steady progress with academics. His parent rated the impact of the SOI Program as good in reading, written expression, and behavior. Impact on attention was rated as fair, while impact on behavior was excellent. The parent could not credit the SOI Program with any impact on handwriting or mathematics. The parent reported that he thought the Program was "awesome," and that he would like to see it returned to the school. He thought it helped all students look at concepts in broader ways.

SOI Teacher Information
The SOI Program was in the school during the 1998-1999 academic year only. The former SOI teacher was not available, and other staff at the school could not give much information.

Classroom Teacher Information
The classroom teacher reported that Case Study 13 was referred to the SOI Lab because of behavior and learning difficulties, and he attended the Lab for the year it was in the school. The student's reading comprehension, written expression, and handwriting were about 3 years below grade level, while his word recognition and listening comprehension were 2 years below grade level. Mathematics was a stronger area, and the student was approximately one to a year and half below grade level. The classroom teacher could not respond to the rating scale.

SOI Impact
The classroom teacher could not complete the rating scale, and the SOI teacher could not respond in terms of Case Study 13. The parent reported the SOI Program had a good impact on reading and mathematics, while the parent could not attribute any change in written expression or handwriting to the Program. The impact on behavior was rated as good, and attention as fair. The biggest impact was on self-concept, which was rated as excellent. The parent added that he would like the Program returned as he thought it had help his child, as well as other students in the school.

Case Study 14
Whitworth Elementary School
At the end of the 2000-01 school year, Case Study 14 was in the 5th grade.

Background Information
Case Study 14's medical history continued to be unremarkable. His school attendance was good. While problems with self-concept and attention were not reported by his parent this year, behavior problems were noted. His classroom teacher reported that in a school setting, Case Study 14 still exhibited some difficulty with attending. He received services from Title I for reading and saw the school counselor.

In 1998 he was referred to the SOI Lab because of problems with organization, memory, following directions, attention/focusing, and reading. He was in the Lab for two school years and graduated. He was involved as well with SOI activities in the classroom.

On the 2001 Oregon State Assessment for Benchmark 2 he did not meet the standards for Reading, but met the standards for Mathematics.

Parent Information
Case Study 14's parent reported the student continued to have good self-concept and attention was not a problem this year at home. He continued to exhibit problems with controlling his behavior. It was reported that the student had continued to make academic progress. The impact of the SOI Program was rated as good for reading, while all the other areas were rated as showing a fair impact.

SOI Teacher Information
The SOI teacher reported Case Study 14 had graduated from the Program after two school years. It was reported that the student was so intent on graduating from the Program that he came in after school to work. The impact of the Program on his academics was rated as excellent for mathematics, good for reading, and fair for written expression and handwriting. Impact on attention was rated as excellent and behavior as good. The impact on self-concept was noted as a result of outside sources, and not the SOI Program.

Classroom Teacher Information
The classroom teacher reported that Case Study 14's word recognition, written expression, and handwriting were at the 4th grade level, while reading comprehension was at the 5th grade level. Listening comprehension and mathematics were at the 5th grade level. When rating the impact of the SOI Program, the academic areas of reading, written expression, and handwriting were rated as fair, while mathematics was rated as good. The impact on self-concept was rated as good, behavior as fair, and attention as poor. The classroom teacher added that the influence of the SOI Program also could be seen in better organizational skills.

SOI Impact
The respondents were in agreement that the SOI Program had a fair impact on Case Study 14 in some areas of academics, as well as behavior. Improvement in reading attributed to the SOI Program was rated at fair by the classroom teacher and good by the other participants. Credit given to the SOI Program for improvement in attention was mixed, and ranged from excellent to poor by the classroom teacher. Only the student's parent and classroom teacher could cite the SOI Program as having any positive impact on self-concept. The classroom teacher added that improvement in the student's organization abilities could be tied to the SOI Program.

Case Study 15
Gray Elementary School
At the end of the 2000-01 school year, Case Study 15 was in the 5th grade at Lewis and Clark Elementary School.

Background Information
Little change had occurred in Case Study 15's medical history, and she continued to take medication for allergies and allergy-induced asthma. The student's school attendance continued to be good this 2000-01 academic year. The student repeated kindergarten. The school reported the student was about a year below grade level in reading and mathematics, while other areas were at grade level.

The student continued on an Individualized Educational Program (IEP) for academics. The initial IEP was February 1999.

In February 1998, she was referred to the SOI Lab and graduated from the SOI Lab in October 1999. The SOI teacher reported the student participated in the SOI Program in the classroom on the days she did not come to the Lab during the 1998-99 and 1999-2000 school years.

The latest recorded results were for the 2000 Oregon Plus Assessment: the student did not meet the standards for Reading, but she met the standards for Mathematics.

Parent Information
Case Study 15's parent reported the student did not have a behavior problem, and self-concept had continued to improve. Reading and mathematics were still weak, but steady progress had been made in those subjects. She reported that the SOI Program had "turned her daughter around and [was] getting her the help she needed to succeed in school and have an improved self-image." The impact of the SOI Program was rated with good improvement in mathematics, and excellent in all the other areas. Another area seen to have improved as the result of the SOI Program was the student's understanding of her learning disability and ways to overcome it. This category was written in and rated as excellent.

SOI Teacher Information
The SOI teacher reported that Case Study 15 was referred to the Program for low performance in reading, written language, and handwriting. She was in the Program approximately 11 months before she graduated. The SOI teacher reported that the 3rd grade teacher saw major improvement in reading and disruptive behaviors, and improvement in all other areas. The 4th grade teacher thought the Program had helped with focusing, reading, and behavior. The Title I teacher commented that he had seen reading and focusing improvement. The student's parent credited the SOI Program with helping to identify vision (i.e., focusing and tracking) problems. The SOI teacher rated the impact of the SOI Program on the improvement of reading and handwriting as good, and written expression as excellent. Mathematics was not seen as an area for consideration. The SOI teacher noted the Program had an excellent impact on improving reversals.

Classroom Teacher Information
The questionnaire was completed by the resource room teacher, who reported the student was the top reader in the resource room. Difficulty with phonics and spelling were reported. Reading and mathematics were at the 4th grade level, and listening comprehension, written expression, and handwriting were at the 5th grade level. The student had moved Fall of 2000 to the non-SOI school, where the teacher was unfamiliar with the SOI Program, and unable to complete the rating scale.

SOI Impact
Only the SOI teacher and Case Study 15's parent responded to the rating scale. Improvement attributed to the SOI Program in the areas of reading and the SOI teacher rated written expression as excellent by the student's parent and good. Improvement in mathematics was rated as good by the student's parent, while the SOI teacher did not see this as being an applicable area. Both rated behavior and attention as excellent. The student's parent rated improvement in self-concept as excellent and the SOI teacher rated this area as good. Other areas that were written in and rated as excellent were improvement in reversals, according to the SOI teacher, and understanding and working with the student's learning disability, according to the student's parent.

Case Study 16
Gray Elementary School
At the end of the 2000-01 school year, Case Study 16 was in the 7th grade at Astoria Middle School.

Background Information
Case Study 16's medical history continued to be unremarkable. His school attendance was good for the 2000-01 academic year.

Case Study 16 began the first year of the SOI Program at Gray Elementary School in the Spring of 1998 and continued through the 1998-99 school year, at which time he graduated. He had been referred to the SOI Lab for weak academic performance, being disruptive in class, being uncooperative with other students, and focusing difficulties. The SOI teacher related that the student participated in the SOI Program in the classroom on the days he did not attend Lab.

The student had been placed on an Individualized Educational Program (IEP) in 1997 for reading and written language. At middle school, he continued on an IEP for the same with the addition of mathematics. He had not continued on the Speech/Language IEP he was placed on in 1997.

Case Study 16's latest recorded results were for the 2000 Oregon PLUS Test, on which he did not meet standards for Reading or Mathematics.

Parent Information
The parent reported Case Study 16 continued to make progress in academics. The impact of the SOI Program was rated as fair improvement in reading, while written expression, handwriting, and mathematics were rated as good. Excellent improvement in behavior, attention, and self-concept were attributed to the SOI Program.

SOI Teacher Information
The SOI teacher who had worked with Case Study 16 reported the student had stated the SOI Lab was fun and that he was getting better at some things. The classroom teacher that he had at Gray Elementary School had commented that the SOI Program had made a huge difference, that the student had made steady improvement in academics, behavior, and self-concept. The SOI teacher rated the impact of the SOI Program on the student's reading as excellent, and the impact on the other areas as good. The impact was rated as excellent on behavior, attention, and self-concept.

Classroom Teacher Information
The resource room teacher because of his knowledge of the student's academic achievement levels completed the classroom teacher questionnaire. He reported that Case Study 16 was still achieving below grade level in academics. Word recognition was at the 4th grade level, reading comprehension and written expression were at the 5th grade level, and mathematics was at the 6th grade level. The resource room teacher reported that the student's efforts were good and his grades were near average. Since the resource room teacher knew little about the SOI Program, he could not relate any progress to that Program.

SOI Impact
Case Study 16 had graduated from the SOI Program and moved on to a middle school where he was below grade level in academics, although his parent and former SOI teacher credit the SOI Program with helping the student to make academic gains. They both rated the impact of the SOI Program on the student as good for mathematics, written expression, and handwriting, while his parent thought the impact on reading was fair. The SOI teacher reported the impact of the SOI Program on reading as excellent. They were in agreement that attention, behavior, and self-concept showed excellent improvement, attributed to the Program. The student's previous teacher had reported to the SOI teacher that the SOI Program had a positive impact on the student's academics, behavior, and self-concept. The resource room teacher, who completed classroom teacher form, could not report on the impact of the SOI Program.

Case Study 17

Vale Elementary School

At the end of the 2000-01 school year, Case Study 17 was in the 7th grade and attending Vale Middle School.

Background Information

Case Study 17's medical history has been unremarkable. School attendance for the 2000-01 academic year was not a concern.

Case Study 17 started in the first year of the SOI Program at Vale Elementary School in the Spring of 1998 and continued through the 1998-1999 school year. He participated in the SOI Lab and SOI activities within the classroom. (The Program was not available in the school for the 1999-00 school year.) The records were not available to show whether or not he graduated from the SOI Program.

At middle school, the student continued on an Individualized Educational Program for (IEP) for reading and written language with services delivered by an aide in the classroom. The initial IEP was instated in 1997.

Case Study 17's latest recorded results were for the 2000 Oregon PLUS Test. He did not meet the standards for Reading or Mathematics.

Parent Information

Case Study 17's parent reported that the student had continued to make progress in academics. His parent noted that the student had not liked going to the SOI Lab because he had to leave the classroom. Even with that, the parent related it had some merit for the student. She rated the impact of the SOI Program as fair improvement in reading, mathematics, and behavior, and poor improvement in written expression and handwriting. Good improvement in attention and self-concept was attributed to the SOI Program.

SOI Teacher Information

A former SOI teacher who had worked with Case Study 17 in the SOI Lab reported the student participated during the 1997-98 school year and continued until the end of the Program at the end of the 1998-99 school year. The impetus for the original referral was because of poor academic performance. The former SOI teacher did not have information about the impact of the SOI on the student's academics or other areas.

Classroom Teacher Information

The classroom teacher reported that Case Study 17's was still achieving below grade in academics, although current STAR test results showed he was at grade level for mathematics (7.4). The same test for reading showed he was about two years (5.7) below his present grade placement. His teacher reported listening comprehension and written expression to be at about the 3rd grade level. She commented that the student's visual tracking was weak, and that he had difficulty following directions. In addition, she noted he had a short attention span and very poor independent work habits. The student's classroom teacher did not know much about the SOI Program and could not relate any progress to the SOI Program.

SOI Impact

Case Study 17's parent reported that the biggest impact of the SOI Program on the student's attentiveness and self-concept, which were rated as good, while fair to poor improvement was attributed to the Program in academics and behavior. As noted previously, the student did not like being pulled out of class to attend the SOI Lab. Neither the former SOI teacher nor the classroom teacher could report on the impact of the SOI Program.

Teacher Interview Transcripts

Through the month of February, 2001, the evaluation conducted face to face teacher interviews with 15 classroom teachers and 1 specialist in 9 of the SOI Program schools. Teachers interviewed were primarily teaching in Oregon Benchmark grades, and/or had been using the classroom modules portion of the SOI Program and referring students to the SOI Lab for one school year or more. Questions asked were based around length of time in the teaching profession and school; length of time using the SOI classroom portion of the Program; and benefits for students through use of the classroom modules and SOI Lab, including toward Benchmarks and state assessments. Comments and reflections were also offered by some teachers and are included here. Questions were asked informally and in no particular order. The following is each interview by order of grade taught.

Grade 2 teacher

2nd grade teacher, at [school] since 1977, teaching since 1971. 20 kids in class, 6 leave since start of the year.
Modules? Taken a while to figure out you need to do them at a specific time each day. We do them directly after lunch, 4/5 days a week. I'm really happy with it. Hard to say if it's SOI in particular; so many variables. I just believe children need visual tracking and focusing and exercises that help them concentrate—SOI provides that for them. 5-6 kids in class go to Lab; others do math stations.
Benefits? Don't see visual tracking as part of the regular curriculum except for L-R for reading and writing. Students having difficulty with reading have some kind of visual tracking problem—district testing program doesn't capture it. Also is a change in children's abilities to concentrate—TV? Lifestyle? I'm really happy to see the program in the building. Reading? More parents are working; less and less time is spent with children.
Lab benefits? Lots of variables--can't say it's SOI. Have an example of 1 girl; very active; hard to get started. Now, once she's started on a task she will complete it—a big improvement for her. Mental discipline: I've observed they follow directions and concentrate.
Negatives? We had separate packets when we first started, and it was a disaster—the booklets now are great.
Benchmarks? Hopefully it helps them with auditory skills and listening. Hopefully it helps visually with progress in reading and writing, and, of course, concentration. Concentration is needed in every curriculum area.
Last words? Last year we had someone [from IDS] come to re-explain benefits of SOI—presentation was optional—6-8 teachers attended. Really reinforced in me the need to do this every day. Would really like to see the administration put it in as a requirement for inservice. It's not optional now—supposed to do it 2-3 times each week—I think that's good. In defense of other teachers, there's a lot of things we're asked to do—there are always time constraints.

Grade 3 teacher

3rd grade teacher, 2nd year at [school], 3rd year teaching. 23 kids in class.
Modules? Usually save for the last ½ hour of the day--they have a calming effect; we sit down and go over directions, and then they do them. In the beginning of the year we did them everyday; now about 2-3 times per week.
Module benefits? [Students] can read and follow directions on their own, follow a task to the end, and can look at it in a different way.
Benchmarks? There's one whole section that has to do with writing—lot to do with details. Really builds their descriptive writing—details, and helps for reading directions.
Negative aspects? Every once in a while directions are very lengthy and it's hard to remember all of them. Also, would help to maybe an introduction to the vocabulary in each section for the students to read.
Kid reactions? Never walked in a classroom so quiet; usually most are wound up—they're so focused [doing modules]—they take care and want to do them, they enjoy it.
This year have 4 Lab kids (girls); last year 7-8. They go at different times. One kid who had terrible attendance--now attendance has shot way up, and confidence level goes up. They're excited about it. [SOI Lab staff person] lets Lab kids give directions on activities they've done in the Lab.

Teachers here think they're great. Down about 3 times a week for modules now, due to time demands. SOI can build so many skills. With no modules I would do something on my own—e.g., cursive writing.
Reading program is phonic based; readers are doing well—exciting to see what they're doing.
Academically, SOI helps with tracking skills, sequencing, focusing and attention to details.
Referrals to Lab? In previous year would talk with teacher and look for students who have difficulty with attention—not SpEd kids—just focusing. A lot of them need that. One of my brightest students in SOI—lots of problems focusing—just after his wandering eye—now he's getting assignments done.

Grade 3 teacher

"Have we been using the modules for 3 years?"
I have been 11 years teaching; 23 years at [school] Elementary. 18 full time, and 1 year half time (home school and IEP).
Lab students: I have 4 go to Lab 2 times a week for ½ hour—would send more, but there's no room.
Modules: When we get to the ones that need extra instruction, we do it as a class. Once kids understand, I assign it as morning seat work. One module with pictures they do, but when they're done we go over as a class. Class aide checks work; we re-do what's not right. First thing in the morning. Kids like some and not others—they don't like the hard ones. But ones like we're doing—has a secret message—they like those.
Skills: I first thought, 'oh, boy, this is going to be the magic bullet!' But I haven't decided that. Helps with visual discrimination; vocabulary; hand-eye—working together; coordination.
Downside: Takes time from other things we need to do. And scheduling is a problem.
Benchmarks: Connection? Not really. Anything they do that stretches the brain is good, but don't know what direct connection there is.
Kids like going to Lab. There's no stigma; "fun thing to do." They like [SOI staff person].
Behavior: It's no problem to get them there. I don't know how SOI relates to behavior. One student is being assessed for ADD. Didn't make him do SOI Lab this year, because he fought it last year.
Referrals: [SOI staff person] and I get together and look for academic lag—it's informal. Some would qualify, but there's no room.
Not much mobility here these days—no migrant workers anymore. Have Hispanics, but they're part of the community.

Grade 3 teacher

Modules: There're parts that I like and parts that I don't like. I have been using them. I can't watch who's following concepts and who's straggling.
This is my 31st year teaching, my 16th at [school], and I was 15 yrs at [school].
I have 23-25 students this year; 24 now in my class.
Modules: As we come into each one I introduce it, discuss content—a big, broad, lesson each section; name, date. We take them out of the book, look at them separately, and send them home so the parents can see. Those who are absent a lot are those who are struggling. I help with the beginning, maybe have an overhead. ESL learners have no idea what words are--the things on worksheets, so I teach logical ways to approach them. There's a lot of peer help. I don't expect all kids to be able to do them on their own.
Some days we do them everyday or 2 to 3 days a week. Early on in the day more often than not as we can introduce all together then they go off on their own.
The downside: As a 3rd grade teacher there's pressure from ODE toward testing—being prepared to meet. Anything not scored or directly related to the test . . . I think all 3rd grade teachers probably feel that. It's a frustration—everything should be geared toward benchmarks.
Upside: I see benefits in visually tracking across, down. Also in organization and logically doing something. It's a real positive thing to do, also a positive thing to succeed at. It's nice for them to see pattern in something on their own.
Don't see big changes in behavior problem kids—don't see SOI changing that.
Lab kids: Four kids in the classroom go to Lab. All 4 love going, and they need to go; need attention tracking and help with focus. One of the 4 is ESL, still can't understand letters but has been here a while.
Referrals: Some are continuing. Some have been dismissed from the program.
I look for those who are sort of lost, who consistently have trouble organizing through the day; kids who are missing it more than once. Those who should be average but functioning below—something's missing. None of my kids who go are on IEPs. But 1 is in referral for that now.

Before SOI, what would have happened to above: Few got it together on their own. Some ended up on IEPs. Used to have a host program for reading, 1 on 1. Concurred some other problems because of the 1 on 1--adult, somebody responsible. Yes, helping kids follow directions on SAS—learn to fill in the bubble.
Lab: Teresa have been here since the program started. She's an integral part of the staff. She's good at keeping up with kids and referrals. She's good at getting information back to us and explaining to us. Kids love to come; they like the organization and it's calming. All the kids would love to come, even the TAG. It's been real positive.
As an educator, I get frustrated when we have and when don't have pullouts.
How the program works for kids: Bare bones it works on self esteem. If it does nothing else than that then it's a success. The consistency of the program, the organized Lab: prescribed—it's good for kids. Positive in the way it's set up. Examples for kids how to set up their own spaces. I think Teresa is the reason it works, too. She's respected in the building. Others say it's a waste of time.
Module problems: Page 39 versus next answer key. The flipping back and forth is no good. Need better pictures. Large poster maybe? Color pictures? A little bit to read to kids before hand?

Grade 3 teacher

3rd grade teacher, 28 kids in class; taught 1st, 2nd, 3rd and blends previously; 11 years teaching, all at [school]. Some kids follow her along the grades.
Modules: 1st year came in packets/folders. Not very effective and hard to handle. Once bound—easier to use. In a blended classroom had trouble with modules: too easy for 2nd graders and too hard for 1st graders. Do modules 2-3 times a week, in the morning. Most of the time kids work at their own pace—can see as I go around who's struggling. Did have some concerns earlier with kindergarten—tracing activities and going backwards—been corrected and changed.
Benefits? Gets kids to focus and think about things in a different way; it's another way to stretch their brains—glyphs were kind of interesting.
Negatives? Ones who need it are ones who I have to keep at them; ones who don't need it fly through them. Ones who need are ones referred to the Lab. They are articulated in difficulty so even the brighter kids are challenged at some point.
Modules and benchmarks? I have not thought about that....can't answer, probably problem solving, reading directions, looking to see the picture following the text—test taking skills.
Lab operation? Students go 2 times a week on Wednesday and Friday afternoons. [SOI Lab staff person] very flexible in scheduling; they love to go. Examples of one student who made gains in focusing—had eye issues and surgery—focus energy from brain through the hand; it clicked for him, just happened. Another student, have not seen any improvement; being assessed for IEP. Information from the Lab really helped with SpEd team.
Effects of SOI? Feeling we are greatly blessed to have the Lab. There comes a time with children when one doesn't know what to do—the Lab is a jewel. Modules aren't as popular or well-received—another thing to try to fit in. But Lab—everyone appreciative of Lab—so vital. Diagnostics that Karen does is really helpful. Fits in state as an alternative learning environment; an alternative way to work with kids. I wasn't always sold (in 1st-2nd), now I am a believer.
Suggestions: addressing needs of 1st/2nd grade teachers (ask them directly); 3rd grade modules working now, I'm getting everything I need.

Grade 3 teacher

13 years teaching; 9 years at [school].
1st group [in SOI] now in 5th grade.
Modules: Ideally set aside a time for module use, but sometimes things come up; then we go longer—15-30 minutes. When doing a module I try to get kids to discuss <u>why</u> they're doing it—try to get them to focus on their own learning—it helps them focus and helps them outside of the module setting.
Effect: at the beginning the start is difficult—all that focusing; then at the end I see carryover to other things—focusing and perception. A lot of it is looking for minute differences; I do see carryover in some kids. If I do the reason for the module, identify the purpose, then there is carryover with the modules.
Referrals: Kids who can't stay on track—spacey—not on track—can't stay with me; that's a real target kid; below grade level in reading and has the ability to come up to grade level; I'm hoping that what's going on is

focusing and staying on track—hoping it's the inability to stay on track. I referred 5 in the 1st year; 4 last year; 2 this year. Had one other kid but could not get parent permission. Best group was 1st group of 3rd graders—off track and all—got them to the Lab—a group committed to coming here, they understood what was happening. Can't attribute it all to SOI—the class is pulled out for Title I and an aide does 1-1 in off days for the kids; end of year, all but 1 meet the benchmark standard. Think SOI helped them.
Benchmarks: gut feeling—validity in that it helps them zero in better—when you can't focus and pinpoint things kind of dead in the water. Don't know if there's proof there.
[School] staff take the benchmarks and state assessments very seriously—lots of time and effort to work on the standards "are we teaching what we need to be doing?" Also, spend time on test taking strategies.
Downside: Some modules I don't care for as much. I look at the big picture of learning and the ability to say on track—perception and finding differences. Is the amount of time spent on the sections valid enough to say it is going to help out? Most of the modules are good. Have not given up anything—squeezes things and moves a little bit faster; also look for activities that connect to other activities—seeks connection/integration with other class work.
Recommendation: I think it's valid—my only thing is some way to pick out those kids and do that intensive work with them. In the world of reading and learning disabilities—if kid went through this program it would improve them; it's one piece in the world of learning disabilities.

Grade 3 teacher

Third grade teacher; 22 kids in class. 10 years teaching, 8 years at [school].
[SOI staff person] comes in twice a week for whole group activities (a low class that needs help—low achievers). We use workbooks and modules; in past years [SOI staff person] did the materials. Do workbook and work in groups—eye exercises and following directions. Use the workbook independently—I think they need both, the whole program. With [SOI staff person] doing the program, it's helping me to understand it better. Worked at a school in San Diego—whole school was SOI. 97% of students were at or above grade level. Broad range of kids in this classroom, socially immature, more than I've had before.
SOI and benchmarks: hard to answer…eye exercises could help with focusing and paying attention to detail. Should help their reading; stopping to take time and working hard to do good work—they're willing to do a good job because they enjoy it; also problem solving—most of the state tests have problem solving.
Negative aspects: not really seeing how the exercises/modules are relating to academics—part of that is not being trained and not knowing the whole program. Kids really enjoy it.
One Lab kid this year, last year 5, year before 5-6. Lots of kids in the room have been through Lab before.
Academic Effects: One kid this year learned in one area; really noticed it with some of the kids at the TAG end. Really noticed some of them struggle with the exercises. Next year would concentrate more on my kids on the high end; other kids get help in other areas. Also see improvement in tracking—more kids getting help in that area—in that respect I've seen improvement (SOI as vision screening).
Some kids are just lazy—exercises help kids strengthen that area, not be so lazy, concentrate. It helped them focus and pay attention to what they're doing—pay attention to detail for problem solving; fills a void for communication and problem solving at home.
Behavior? Don't know…not really keeping track, can't answer that one. When [SOI staff person] is doing SOI in the room, kids enjoy and are successful. A big help with this class this year; just hope we're funded again.
Self-esteem/attitudes? Think it definitely helps—it's motivating to them, you get instant feedback, all are successful and will keep working until they're successful; they don't get frustrated and they all try.
Staff view? I think positive; only thing I've heard it's hard to find the time to do the modules. If teachers had the opportunity like I'm getting this year it would make better sense; actually seeing kids in action helps better than just hearing how its done.
Contact time: 2 ½ hours in the morning; afternoon about 2 ¼ hours.
I hope we don't lose the program—huge difference for me to participate in program and see it myself. Nothing like seeing it for yourself.

Grade 3 teacher

3rd grade teacher, 22 kids in class; 14 years teaching, all at [school]; taught 1, 2, 3, 4, and 1-2 blend.
Modules: Last year and this year are different; modules are bound. Like having all the kids doing all the same thing at the same time; I can check them--if I'm using time in the classroom (haven't been checked otherwise

[by SOI staff person]. Last couple of years assigned pages and then maybe allow class time (20 minutes) to get them done.
Benefits: Varies. Even very high levels are challenged; pure torture for the lower kids. Does things with memorization—we don't do this any other way, helping the memory.
State Assessments: emphasizing reading comprehension, not here; but if it helps memory it will help. Also problem solving and taking the time to follow directions—really like the new reading series—helped with state locator test—kids did really well.
Downside: So pressured, so much to do; lesson plans written for me with Open Court, 2 hours a day; math—all very much prescribed; Tuesday/Thursday afternoon to fit in Social Studies, PE, & health. Does it have benefit? Yes. Don't have enough time, that's the downside.
Referrals: Not referring kids already out of the room; now I look for kids who may need a little extra help. Look for handwriting in referrals; also handwriting and neatness. Did refer lowest kids, too. They end up being the kids who are pulled out. No behavior problems this year—got really lucky.
Effects: See more when [SOI staff person] did the program, as certified teacher. Now they're in the 3rd year of the program and having to seek out referrals. Sees improvement in some kids, but also some kids get stuck—but they're also getting extra help in other areas. It doesn't hurt them and they are working on skills while here. Really happy about Oregon Reads grant; we did a lot of work and no real gains on the state report card; been frustrated—hoping the grant will help change that. Also have 2 kindergartens, making it 4 full days with kindergarten.
The big difference was getting extra teacher this year to decrease class sizes some.

Grade 4 teacher

4th grade teacher, 23 kids in class; 12 years teaching, all at [school].
Modules: Set so done after recess break—do spelling and then SOI (20-30 minutes) at their own pace, and then math. I check to see modules done right and monitor kids. Kids are neutral to excited about it. An example of SpEd twins—each day one or both ask to do work in the "orange book." Most kids like to do them, even with challenges.
Benefits: their eyes are busy and focused—have to look at and be on the problem—forces them to think about keeping focused to do the problem. Took them a while to understand that; they also like the fact it's not a graded thing.
Downside? One more added curriculum.
Benchmarks: problem solving (math); some of the modules have the same step by step thinking; also in writing—descriptive words. 5th benchmark—graduated, but foundation builds. I can tell that kids with 3 years of SOI are along better than those kids without it. Step by step thinking is one of the best parts of the benefits; perseverance is another thing—stay with a task until it's finished. Helps with body control and realization of need/ability to control their bodies.
Referrals: Whole spectrum—behavior problems (severe) to needing a little help with academics. Not SpEd kids, though. Behaviors & more social skills—has to do with their bodies and control. Also some kids (girls) need a confidence boost—hear from kids how they're doing—confidence is definitely up.
Recommendations: make modules (if building-wide) for those who really need them—use with children who need the activities and those who don't need it, don't use it. (A big concern from teachers is everybody has to do it). The Lab is successful.
Don't feel they will try to keep the program on—principal not as supportive (as previous); went to workshop and learned about multiple intelligences—sees the connections.

Grade 4/5 teacher

I teach a 4th and 5th blend, more girls than boys, and that's good. I have 28, approximately half 4th and half 5th. It's my 1st year teaching at [school], and my 3rd year overall.
Modules: I don't do a whole lot, but the students enjoy the book; exercises.
Lab students: On Tuesdays, Wednesdays, and Thursdays students go to Pilot Program from 2 to 3 o'clock; they go to SOI with [SOI staff person].
I let the rest of the kids use the modules at that time. They enjoy them—fly through them. They couldn't get enough of it. They like the challenge, dealing with the missing pieces. On the crossword puzzle, they took initiative to come ask me questions: "what's this picture?"

The 3 who go see [SOI staff person] —their attention and focus really improved. Two students went last year and go this year. One boy student's handwriting improved; he can copy homework faster. Help him reach benchmarks? I don't know. We just took the test before break.
The next test will be more of a tell-tell—multiple choice. Would be good to see how they're focusing. In [state where taught prior] they'd just begun to institute testing last year, and I was teaching 4th grade and just before the test, I left. The math p.s. is not the same as here.
Modules in the classroom? It's hard to find the time, which is why I don't do class instruction on modules. SOI is the thing I really haven't gotten to. Maybe its just me getting used to the schedule. Next year may be different, maybe. More training would make me more comfortable with instructing the modules.
I identified one student for SOI Lab—on an IEP, lots of services. The kind of student I would refer? It would be a kid whose spelling is off; handwriting is a tell-tell thing: hand-eye; I don't see it as a behavior issue; motor parts—stimuli—brain to hand; not necessarily low academic, either. A kid who's acting out, having a hard time—I don't know if SOI would be the thing to change behavior. I think I need to modify what's done in class to correct behavior.
The kids see the modules as filler work; challenge filler work.

Grade 4/5 teacher

Teaches a 4/5 blend; 26 years experience, 12 years at [school]. MS in SpEd and taught in [state], [foreign country], [state].
Modules: Surprised me; they're good, challenging—can cruise through one and then get a challenge. See kids learn differently. In beginning we were very strict with them—was a bit frustrating, then loosened up. Difficult for Lab kids to come back and be behind. A 20-25 minute fun experience, start every morning—modules at 9:25 3 times a week.
Benefits? If child has a good upbringing, good school experience, & positive experience—another opportunity you can't measure. Don't see direct correlation to reading—hope and pray it's there—not had a pre/post (don't know on what) to tell. Kids never groan about them, it's a group experience. I know their vocabulary improves—also visual acuity—looking a CVC words—becoming more aware—has an effect on spelling and what they see in the workbook.
Negatives? No. Because of my background—high time we think about all our range of modalities—visual, auditory, kinesthetic, etc. See lots of connections between Frostig materials and SOI—need a variety of approaches to work the best.
LD kids no longer LD? Hopefully based on some research! Pretty far out thing to say. Hope that something stimulates a nerve ending to connect, and stimulate areas of the brain. Hope and pray a direct positive experience.
Modules/Benchmarks? We've had the conversation—I wouldn't want to give it up because we haven't measured it. Kids have a good time, working together, and seeing what is a little harder for them and easier for others. Awareness comes about the need to pay attention—ultimate challenge to make them a lifelong learner.
Lab? I love it—very positive experience for kids to get to go there. [SOI staff person] takes it very seriously—she's a professional, and kids go there, and they know what they're working on.
Lab benefits? I have yet to see somebody not benefit. With some kids I would say somebody put them on Ritalin—ability to focus and ability to take ownership—help with attention and time on task and overall attitude—definitely influenced by [SOI staff person].
Anything else? If we had to choose program or not, would sure hope to save some of it.—know it needs to prove itself. If we were able to choose, please keep that Lab, even if SpEd department was working at its best, still keep the Lab. Because if not now, we'll pay later.

Grade 3 teacher (T) and a speech pathologist (SP)

SP: excited about SOI due to training in sensory motor integration with Jean Ayres—sees a link and can see a big change in some students. Works on stimulating the vestibular system—has language student do it—uses OT hierarchy does singing and spinning with some kids. Increases their skill in communication—sees amazing differences in verbal formulation—sees as cognitive stimulation.
T: 13 years teaching at [school]—when 1st started had 4th grade and went on to 5th. Likes modules when have the daily time to do them—gave them the kind of work and thinking time they needed and could really go for (TAG students)—very motivating for these kind of kids. Modules: 1st 2 years did them every day—except for schedules but could also plug them in. Kids liked to do them, 30 minutes/day and felt time was well spent—

especially good with support from parents. Modules work on how to think—learn how to learn and how to think; work on categorization.
Downside: Time. Not a whole lot of preparing in a packed curriculum—had to go to answer sheets a lot.
This year referred several kids to the Lab—generally—seeing correlation with state tests. 6 kids from each year in the Lab. Benefits for them: they were struggling in some way or another (1 made 2 years growth in 1 year and passed all benchmarks). Focusing and retention was the issue; he got medication, graduated from the Lab, and followed up with doctor.
SP: even ADD kids with medication—they still have to learn how to focus—to settle and focus themselves. Something they can work out as they mature.
T: 3rd graders and kids who need to settle—have a hard time focusing—they enjoy going [to the Lab]—never had to remind them to go. Helps them settle in physically and mentally. 4 kids go right now and 2 go before school.
Benchmarks? SP: verbal organization—be able to give a speech; writing benchmarks—graded on vocabulary and word choice—organize ideas and content. T: Relates to writing benchmark; also attention to details—taught not to jump to conclusions—they slow down and with state tests they need to be read carefully and attend to details. A lot of kids fail because of not paying attention to details.
T: Referrals made based on having difficulty in some particular academic area (not necessarily socially); especially if they're struggling in reading and language and acquisition of words. Phonics might provide them a means of accessing by learning to see things differently. (SP: kids know how to do the activities). Also see if reversals and small motor skills—some dyslexic tendencies.

Grade 5 teacher

Grade 5. Twenty-seven kids in classroom. My 18th year in Oregon and [school], 3 years elsewhere.
Modules: I have 9 TAG cluster students—1/3 of the class—it's been interesting. Looped with them from 4th grade. Those not identified as TAG are still high performing. Therefore I probably do modules a bit different. I'd go over concepts. But with the group I have—they are enthusiastic about the pages. Now, it's individual, and most kids are on a different page. They check in about where they are. Some of the pages are challenging. The vocabulary offered is good for this group. It's greatly broadened their vocabulary, I feel.
State assessments: connection to writing assessment: There was a situation in a module where they had to identify word with a picture, then to a definition. And a crossword puzzle with some of the words. This group, because of that, has been able to add to their writing vocabulary. But I don't know about their writing tests, when I get them back....
I went to training in Vida...8 years ago? It felt good to identify problems with kids. At that time I was buying black-line masters; found it too hard to keep up. On a positive note, it's good they're all in one book.
Downside: Me as a teacher, I am not always on top of what they're having difficulty with. Children have not reacted negatively, only to say some are too hard—"can't do it."
Lab kids: Have 5 kids going to Lab, 4 from last year. Insecurities in reading and writing. Spelling—making connections with letters and sound. It's not a behavior issue with this group, just feeling uncomfortable with participating in spelling and writing.
Had positive effects on 1 Lab girl. Before, she had difficulty with spelling and writing. She's made fantastic improvements in spelling, writing, attitude. Is it SOI or maturing? I don't know.
These kids did not want to go to Lab at first, or were Title I and didn't want to go there, either. We work with [SOI staff person] about scheduling.
There's no magic program that's going to fix everything. But this program hits on things not dealt with by other programs: whole person, coordination; visual. And when get back tests there seems to be a sigh of relief from parents, kids, teachers, that there are strengths. Gives hope. Not an instant cure-all, but over the long haul it makes a difference for a number of children.

Grade 5 teacher

27 kids in 5th grade; 20 years teaching, about 15 years at [school]. Had 5th grade throughout SOI.
Modules: Absolutely love most of them—thinking and seeing skills are wonderful and don't want to give them up. Kids are challenged by them. Do them whenever—3-4 times a week. Also use activities to incorporate into other things we do, especially vocabulary. Kids love them—beg to do Bridges.
Benefits: Kids look at things in a different way—really think of problem solving—math modules—kind of comes together and reinforces that.

Downside: Not to me; at first it was the time element, but now I've got it so it fits in my schedule; kids work on their own and we go over them together.
Benchmarks: Problem solving. Looking at things in a different way. Also vocabulary would relate to the writing and shapes and letters all have to do with spelling.
3 Lab kids (1 graduate recently); Referrals: kids who don't make letters well or correctly—spelling would be a problem for them. Behavior with me does not even come into it; kids I send don't have behavior problems at all. For 5th grader, directions are clear enough, kids can work them out.
Recommendations: One module I don't like (draw a picture of smoke becoming a string—very hard to explain and kids have difficulty with it—would do away with it). I like how they go from easier to very hard—challenge for the very bright kids—like the challenging aspects.
What replace with? Nothing like this; would not go out and try to replace it.

Grade 5 teacher

5th grade teacher—teaching 25 years, at [school] since about 1990. Have had some previous experience with SOI. Had 4th grade students in Lab, and currently have 3 5th graders going to Lab.
Modules: do them about once per week; kids work independently; used also in summer school for kids who did not meet benchmarks. Kids' attitudes vary but seem to enjoy the modules—you can see if they get frustrated and then it's something to focus on. Do think it helps them focus—reading to follow directions; hardly ever have kids ask me about directions; helps also with visuals in math—promotes visualization and patterns.
Benchmarks: see connection due to critical thinking and maybe also with test taking strategies; gives some strategies for being successful. Kids pretty much enjoy the modules—they do it and they get into it.
Have 27 kids in class, 18 boys—very physical; SOI really good with this group—helped this group of boys with visual motor skills. Being able to tie in brain with what they need to do on the paper. Using brain to track and see similarities and differences—higher level skills we work on quite a lot, attention to detail. Also being able to record and transfer.
Negatives: It's always been the time; if I have the time I'll do it a couple of times a week. Also the sequencing—can I jump around? Also need individual assessment to tailor for individual kids. Would include option of the modules if had the choice—particularly like the creative aspect of the module parts.
Lab effects: One thing Lab has picked up is kids with vision tracking problems—really strengthened their ability to learn. Kids like to go—2 half hours a week; [SOI staff person] is terrific about working with us if kids want to do stuff in the classroom. Good communication with parents and teachers about the Lab operation and how the kids are doing. Specific effects? Academic effects—guessing—kids improve in memorizing math facts, handwriting, editing, reading has improved. All of the students have improved and I think this is a piece of why they have improved. Behavior? No. Self-esteem? Yes. TAG kids will come in to teach and kids will say, "I can do this or that"; they're able to do more academically.
[School] views? Mixed. I would say upper grade staff use it more; everyone is supportive of the Lab. As for classroom use—I think that varies. I probably use it more than some. I think it's a wonderful program but I'm not surprised we're losing it. The state should fund it—a good management program and very good for TAG kids. Has filled some holes that I'll find hard to fill without.

Teacher Satisfaction Survey Comments

The following comments were offered by classroom teachers in the 17 SOI pilot schools on the 2000-01 Teacher Satisfaction Survey (Appendix 9), administered to classroom teaching staff both at mid and year end. The survey questions ask for frequency of module use and degree of satisfaction in terms of the modules' ease and enjoyment for teacher and students, and the modules' helpfulness for student learning, learning disabled students, and students whose behavior in class had been a problem. Section 4.3 of the report provides an in-depth discussion of the survey results.

Mid Year, 2000-01

- I'll get on the ball [using the modules]!
- [Modules are] Great!
- Not sure [if helpful for learning disabled students].
- I share with other teachers. I used them twice for 15 minutes.
- [Classroom use of modules are on] no specific schedule.
- [Module use] not as often as I did in previous year.
- I really love the program, and appreciate the transfer from packet to booklet format.
- [Helpful for students with behavior problems:] Unknown-unable to evaluate.
- I see growth in students served in the SOI lab, but the classroom modules aren't showing me much for the general population ~ good students do well on it, and poor students don't and have difficulty completing it along with all their other assignments.
- The blended curriculum is the same book for 2 years in a row...that is a bit disappointing for my 2nd graders to repeat the exact same book.

Year End, 2000-01

- Some components need more background info. Other parts are enjoyable to teach and enjoyed by students. Some parts are too challenging and create frustration in students.
- These [ratings] are based on my class. Those who attend individual SOI classes benefit from the time.
- I see students with these books out quite often - I don't teach [modules], but they like to work in them.
- Small group instruction in the lab is the best part of this program.
- I don't think the worksheet pages are not as helpful as the activities with [SOI staff].
- [Rating given] only because I have to give up the time.
- At the end of the year so much of the benchmarks work was crowded in, and we were not able to work as much on the modules.
- [Time spent on modules] varies this year because of time and students.

Third Party Evaluation of the Effectiveness of the Structure of Intellect Model Schools Pilot Program

TEACHING RESEARCH DIVISION, WESTERN OREGON UNIVERSITY

Date: **October 2000**

To: **SOI Pilot School Principals and Office Staff**

From: **Andrew McConney, Project Director**
Laurel Cuthbertson, Project Administrator

Re: **School Data Collection for the 2000-'01 Evaluation of the Structure of Intellect (SOI) Model Schools Pilot Program**

1. Thanks for your help in collecting the data for your school that will be used in our continuing evaluation of the SOI Program.

2. As was the case in previous years, we will be sending you a check for $200.00 to help offset some of your copying, postage, and other expenses associated with collecting these data.

3. Attached please find the 5 data forms that you will need to complete (one each for special education referrals, behavior referrals, English as a second language, average daily attendance, and "teacher satisfaction").

4. The teacher satisfaction form should be copied and distributed to all of your teachers twice this year, once at around Christmas break (mid-December), and once toward the end of the school year (mid-May). The completed forms should be collected and returned to us.

5. The other data forms should be completed on an ongoing basis, and returned to us at the end of the school year.

6. If you should have any questions please call or e-mail either

   Andrew McConney mcconna@wou.edu (503) 838-8702, or
   Laurel Cuthbertson cuthberl@wou.edu (503) 838-8789

7. Thanks again for your continued help in conducting this evaluation. We wish you a great school year!

School Data for Year 4: August 2000 through June 2001

Source	Question	Relevant Data
ODE	**1 academic achievement**	2000-2001 Oregon Statewide Assessment data in Reading/Literature and Math by school for Grades 3 & 5
√	**2 special education**	Number of ***referrals*** for Special Education assessment by month and grade
√	**3 behavior**	Number of ***referrals*** for unacceptable school (classroom, hallways, playground, bus) behavior by month and grade
√	**4 English language acquisition**	Number of students ***leaving*** ESL/LEP programs/classifications by grade, the ***time*** spent in the school's program, and the reason for program exit
√	**5 average daily attendance**	Quarterly and yearly attendance rates
TR	**6 student self-esteem**	IDS/SOI self-esteem data, case studies, teacher focus groups
√ **TR**	**7 teacher satisfaction**	Teacher satisfaction survey, focus groups, case studies

√ = To be collected by school staff

SOI PILOT PROGRAM EVALUATION: SCHOOL DATA FORM FOR

SPECIAL EDUCATION ASSESSMENT REFERRALS

1. ***Number of students on IEPs (schoolwide)***

   Beginning of 2000-2001: _____ ***Date count taken:*** _____

   End of 2000-2001: _____ ***Date count taken:*** _____

2. ***Please complete the table below.***
   Instructions: In each box of the table, please indicate the <u>number of students</u> in your school who were <u>referred for assessment</u> to determine eligibility for special education services. (If records of referrals have not been kept, please write "NR" in the box in question, and provide a brief explanation on the back of this form.) Thank you.

3. ***Please note: If your school is a K-5 elementary, please ignore the column for Grade 6.***

Year / Month	Grade Level K	1	2	3	4	5	6	School-wide
1999-2000								
2000-2001 September								
October								
November								
December								
January								
February								
March								
April								
May								
June								

SOI PILOT PROGRAM EVALUATION: SCHOOL DATA FORM FOR

BEHAVIOR REFERRALS

1. ***Please complete the table below.***
Instructions: In each box of the form below, please indicate the number of students in your school who were referred to the Principal or Assistant Principal, or their designee, for unacceptable school behavior (classroom, hall, playground, or bus) by month and grade.

(If records of referrals have not been kept, please write "NR" in the box in question, and provide a brief explanation on the back of this form.)

Thank you.

Year / Month	Grade Level							
	K	1	2	3	4	5	6	School-wide
1999-2000								
2000-2001 September								
October								
November								
December								
January								
February								
March								
April								
May								
June								

SOI PILOT PROGRAM EVALUATION: SCHOOL DATA FORM FOR

ENGLISH LANGUAGE ACQUISITION

1. ***Number of students receiving ESL services (schoolwide)***

   End of 1999-2000 (last school year): _____ ***Date count taken:*** _____

   Beginning of 2000-2001: _____ ***Date count taken:*** _____

   End of 2000-2001: _____ ***Date count taken:*** _____

2. ***Please complete the table below.***
   Instructions: In each box of the table, please indicate the number of students leaving ESL/LEP services at your school this year.

   If there are any students who leave ESL/LEP classification this year, please indicate on the back of this form the amount of time (in months) the child has spent in ESL/LEP at your school, and give the reason for their exit from the program. Thank you. (If records are not available, please write "NR" in the box in question, and provide a brief explanation on the back of this form.)

3. ***Please note: If your school is a K-5 elementary, please ignore the column for Grade 6.***

Month	Students leaving ESL/LEP services — Grade							
	K	1	2	3	4	5	6	School-wide
2000-2001 September								
October								
November								
December								
January								
February								
March								
April								
May								
June								

SOI PILOT PROGRAM EVALUATION: SCHOOL DATA FORM FOR

AVERAGE DAILY ATTENDANCE

1. *Number of students enrolled at your school:*
   a) *End of 1999-2000 (last school year):* _____ *Date count taken:* _____
   b) *Beginning of 2000-2001 (this year):* _____ *Date count taken:* _____
   c) *End of 2000-2001:* _____ *Date count taken:* _____

2. *Please complete the table below. In each box of the table, please indicate the average daily attendance (attendance rates in %) by grade, if available. If not available by grade, please report "schoolwide" attendance.*

   For last year, please report attendance rates for the year as a whole. For this year (1999-2000), please indicate quarterly attendance rates (these are typically reported by the school to the district). Thank you.

3. *Please note: If your school is a K-5 elementary, please ignore the column for Grade 6.*

Month/ Year	Grade Level							
	K	1	2	3	4	5	6	School-wide
1999-2000								
2000-2001 1st quarter								
2nd quarter								
3rd quarter								
4th quarter								

SOI PILOT PROGRAM EVALUATION: SCHOOL DATA FORM FOR

TEACHER SATISFACTION WITH SOI CURRICULUM

1. *Please distribute this form for completion by each teacher who has used SOI Modules in their classroom. Thank you.*

THE FOLLOWING SECTIONS ARE TO BE COMPLETED BY THE TEACHER:

2. ***Teacher Information:***

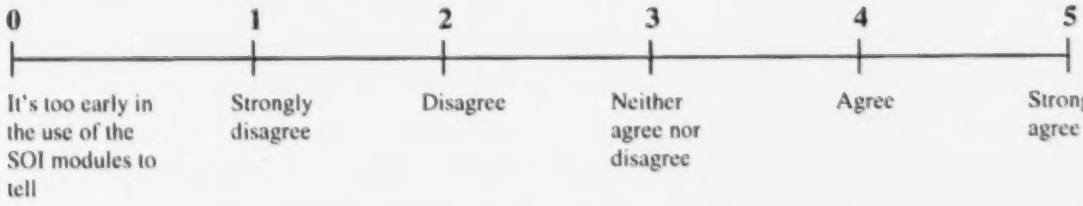
   a) Grade:_____ ***b) Number of Students:_____***

   c) This year, I started using SOI modules around (date): _____

   d) How often do you use the SOI modules? (e.g., 20 minutes per day, except Fridays, for about 30 minutes per day)

   _____

3. ***Using the scale given below, please rate each of the statements regarding the SOI curriculum modules by circling the appropriate number. Thanks.***



The SOI curriculum modules are:						
1) easy to use...	0	1	2	3	4	5
2) enjoyable to teach...	0	1	2	3	4	5
3) enjoyed by my students...	0	1	2	3	4	5
4) helpful for my students' learning generally...	0	1	2	3	4	5
5) particularly helpful for my learning disabled students...	0	1	2	3	4	5
6) particularly helpful for my students whose behavior in class had been a problem...	0	1	2	3	4	5
7) satisfying for me as a teacher.	0	1	2	3	4	5

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I. DOCUMENT IDENTIFICATION:

Title: Third Party Evaluation of the Effectiveness of the ***Structure of Intellect*** Model Schools Pilot Program: Year 4 Report.

Author(s): Andrew McConney, Robert Ayres, Laurel Cuthbertson, Deanna Todd-Goodson

Corporate Source: Evaluation and Research Group Office, Teaching Research Division, Western Oregon University

Publication Date: June 30, 2001

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TITLE: Third Party Evaluation of the Effectiveness of the ***Structure*** of ***Intellect Model*** Schools Pilot Program. Year 3 Evaluation Report.
AUTHOR: McConney, Andrew; Ayres, Robert; Cuthbertson, Laurel; Todd-Goodson, Deanna
PUBLICATION_DATE: 2000
ABSTRACT: This report presents findings of the third year evaluation of the Structure of Intellect (SOI) Model Schools Pilot Program in Oregon, a program based on the learning theories and Structure of Intellect model attributed to J. Guilford. The SOI program, developed by R. and M. Meeker, uses a combination of structured curriculum in the form of modules and an in-school SOI Learning Center to teach and develop important learning abilities for students. The SOI program focuses on 26 learning abilities claimed to be critical for effective learning. In 1999-2000, 17 elementary schools piloted the SOI program and 11 students served as case studies. As in the preceding 2 years, no systemic or practical differences were observed between the pilot schools and the 17 comparison schools included in the evaluation. No program effects have been observed in any of the key areas addressed by the evaluation. Careful synthesis of the data gathered for this evaluation does not support claims for school-wide improvements in academic achievement, reduction in referrals for special education services, reduction in referrals for inappropriate behavior, or improvements in school attendance rates. However, many program specialists and technicians believe that the program is effective in supporting student learning. It is possible that the individualized care students received through the SOI program has made considerable difference in their educational lives. The program has been extended for another year, and evaluation of the fourth year may detect some quantifiable differences in achievement for program participants. Nine appendixes contain supplemental information, teacher responses to study questions, and some data collection forms. (Contains 23 tables, 30 figures, and 14 references.) (SLD)
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